Being an internal coach: A study of the experience and its impact on those who took on the role

Mark Robson

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

York St John University

York Business School

November 2020

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

Acknowledgements

Over the last five years I have benefitted from the input and support of four skilled supervisors. By far the most significant contribution has been made by Dr George Boak, but I have also received valuable input from professors Lynne Gabriel and Bob Garvey, and Dr Sarah Crabbe, who, coming on board at the start of 2020 gave a significant amount of her time to review and challenge the developing thesis. Additionally, I have benefitted from being able to discuss aspects of my research with Dr Julie Morton, Kate Kennett and Dr Shirley Jenner who have all played the role of 'critical friend': thank you.

For almost three years of this journey I was fortunate to have the company of fellow PhD researcher and friend Alan Wingrove, both of us seeking to further the understanding of internal coaches. Our conversations enriched and enhanced our research until Alan's untimely death on 30th October 2020. I am profoundly sad not to be able to see him complete his research, and for him not to be there to see my own completed. But I am grateful for the many conversations we were able to have, thank you Alan.

I am indebted to the internal coaches who helped with the design and testing of the survey questionnaire and interview guide used in the research, and to Hazel Reece for her help in converting the questionnaire from a design on paper to an on-line tool. But of course, this research would not have been possible without the 484 internal coaches who took time out of their busy days to complete the questionnaire. I am particularly grateful to the 20 internal coaches who gave up their time to talk with me, and who trusted me enough to speak candidly about their experience of being an internal coach.

This thesis is the culmination of a 10-year journey as an internal coach and researcher. I have had the good fortune to have been accompanied at different times on that journey by four skilled guides and mentors. They are David Megginson, Ian Jenner, Bob Garvey and George Boak. I acknowledge here the huge debt I owe to each of them and offer them my grateful thanks.

Last, but by no means least, my thanks to Carol and Phoebe for putting up with me these last six years. No one else would have done so, and I am more grateful than they can know.

Abstract

This thesis is an account of a study of internal coaches, those employees who part-time, in addition to their day-job, coach colleagues in their organisation. The study addresses the research question: How does the experience of being an internal coach impact the coach? Although coaching is widely used to support employee development in organisations, and internal coaches deliver a significant, and growing, proportion of this activity, internal coaching remains under-researched. And there has been almost no research conducted which has focussed upon how internal coaches experience their coach role. The study rectifies this knowledge gap using mixed methods research, an on-line questionnaire survey (n=484) followed by one-to-one interviews (n=20).

From the research findings a conceptual map of internal coaches' experience of being a coach has been constructed. This shows how internal coaches' lived experience of coaching changes them, that their belief in the importance of coaching leading them to prioritise coaching and integrate it into their lives. It also highlights how, in response to the environment in which they coach, coaches take steps to protect their ability to keep coaching, driven by the belief that coaching is beneficial to those they coach, to their organisation, and to themselves. Specifically, the study sheds new light on the role of prior experience of coaching on the decision to become a coach; coaches' choice to integrate coaching behaviours and values into their professional and personal lives; how different coaching environments impact the approach coaches take to their coaching; that coaches' perspectives on coaching often differ from those of their line manager and how coaches deal with this; and the steps internal coaches take to protect their ability to coach. The study finds that coaching is seen as bigger and more important by internal coaches than it may appear to people around them.

Table of contents

Page

List of tables

List of figures

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

My research is concerned with coaching in organisations, specifically with the internal coaches who coach their colleagues in organisations. The research asks: How do internal coaches experience being a coach, what impact does the experience have on them, and what do they do as a result? In this chapter I outline the basis for my decision to conduct research into the experience of being an internal coach and the research strategy adopted.

But what is an internal coach? The working definition used in this study is that internal coaches are employees who are formally recognised as coaches by their organisation, but for whom coaching is a part-time role, carried out alongside other organisational responsibilities and not their main role in the organisation. These internal coaches work with, that is coach, fellow employees from other areas of their organisation, but not colleagues from within their own chain of command; that is, there is no managerial link between coach and coachee. The focus of my research is the internal coaches themselves, not the coaching process they carry out. But why research internal coaches?

Personal motivation for the research

My own interest in coaching in organisations, and internal coaches in particular, began in 2010 when, 18 months after joining a new company which had a coaching scheme, I decided to apply to join their fourth cohort of trainee internal coaches. As part of the process of becoming an accredited internal coach, trainees were required to write a paper, equivalent to one of the modules of Sheffield Hallam University's Coaching and Mentoring MSc, about their early coaching experiences. This meant that 2010 was also the start of the academic journey which resulted in a master's degree in Coaching and Mentoring from Sheffield Hallam University in 2014, and ultimately, this thesis.

The final part of the master's degree required me to carry out a piece of research, and I chose to follow eight internal coaches on their journey to becoming internal coach supervisors in my organisation's coaching scheme. I found the whole research experience hugely stimulating and enjoyable. By the time I handed in my dissertation I had approached Professor Bob Garvey at York St John University with a research proposal for a PhD: to explore further the experience of being an internal coach.

Of the many learnings I took from being an internal coach two are particularly relevant to the research I decided that I wanted to do. First was the impact that being a coach had on me, and my curiosity to understand whether my experience was unique to me or was shared by other internal coaches. Second, the realisation, through an ongoing debate with a fellow trainee coach about the

role of goals in coaching, that in effect we were constructing our coach roles through discussion of our experiences.

I was an internal coach from 2010 until I retired at the end of 2017. I recognise that the experience of being a coach changed me. For example, I became more self-aware, curious as to why I reacted to something in the way that I did, but also much more aware of the reactions of others, in particular their reactions to me. I also recognise that my experience of using coaching techniques with coachees led to me changing my approach with others around me. I frequently adopted a coaching approach with colleagues and with my team. I did this because I realised that by doing so I benefited; helping others to find their own solutions to the problems they raised reduced the pressure on me to provide the answers myself. From this flowed a third significant change: I became much more patient with those around me, much more willing to make time for others. These changes, and others, remain in place to this day.

During initial coach training I was paired with David, and we remained coaching 'buddies' until he was made redundant 12 months later. During training we had been shown and practised the GROW coaching model (Whitmore, 2002) with its emphasis on 'goals', and the role of goals in coaching became the subject of an ongoing debate between us; one of many. David's early experience of working with coachees led him to see coaching goals as a way of ensuring that his purpose as coach was clear, both for himself and for his coachee, and that having clear goals allowed him to set boundaries for his coaching work. The other function of coaching goals for David was as a means of ensuring that coaching remained connected to the needs of the organisation, because for David, as a coach, he was serving the organisation. My initial experience of goals was different. One of my first coachees came into the relationship with goals that he had been given by his line manager. However, I sensed that he had not bought into the goals set, or to being coached to deliver these goals. We agreed to set them to one side whilst he worked out what he wanted to achieve from our sessions. Four coaching sessions later we both realised that the coachee had gone beyond the initial goals given to him, surprising and delighting us both. Our different experiences resulted in David and I seeing the role of coaching goals differently. For David they were a way to clarify and define what he did as a coach, ultimately limiting his involvement, whereas I had experienced goals as potentially limiting to the coachee, something to be avoided. But this also led to us having different views about who was the primary client for our coaching work. For David it was the organisation, but for me it was the individual I was working with, the coachee. The point is not which of us was right and which wrong, but rather that it was through these and other experiences of being a coach that we constructed our individual internal coach roles.

As a result of my experience of being a coach I took decisions about the place coaching would occupy in my professional and my personal life, and the priority I would give coaching versus my other organisational activities and responsibilities. But I was always aware that I did not know how unique my experience of being a coach was, how other internal coaches experienced the coach role, or how other coaches' experiences impacted the decisions they made about their coaching role. It also became clear during my engagement with the coaching literature as a master's student that these questions were not addressed in the research literature. Understanding how my experiences compared with other internal coaches was therefore a key driver in my decision to undertake this research.

Rationale for conducting this research

Over the last 40 years the use of coaching in organisations has grown significantly (CIPD, 2009; 2011a; 2015). Today coaching is the norm within a wide range of organisations (Gray, Garvey and Lane, 2016). In parallel with this development a large commercial coaching industry has grown up to service this demand: coaches, coach trainers, coaching scheme designers, coach supervisors, coach professional bodies. In 2016 there were estimated to be more than 50,000 coaches practising globally, generating annual revenues estimated at US$2.4 billion (ICF, 2016). According to Frisch (2001) the financial implications for organisations of meeting an increasing demand for coaching led to the emergence of internal coaches at about the turn of the century. Since then many organisations have invested heavily in internal coach training and development (Carter and Miller, 2009) as part of their coaching strategy. As a result, Internal coaches now deliver a large and growing proportion of the coaching that takes place in organisations (CIPD, 2011a; Ridler report, 2013; 2016; Sherpa Executive Coaching Survey, 2016).

As well as coaching practitioners, the growth and importance of coaching in organisations has attracted the attention of researchers and there is a growing body of coaching research literature (Gray, Garvey and Lane, 2016). However, this research has largely focussed on the process, outcomes and benefits of coaching (Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2009; 2018; Fillery-Travis and Cox, 2014), arguably because of the need to demonstrate the value of coaching to organisational clients. But surprisingly, given their significance, although the research base on coaching has grown there has been relatively little research conducted which has focussed on internal coaches (Ebrahimi and Cameron, 2012); the literature on internal coaching remains largely practitioner advocacy based (St John-Brooks, 2014). And there has been almost no research reported which has explored how internal coaches experience the coach role or explored what impact the coach role has upon them.

Reviewing this literature, I found only four studies which examined the internal coach experience, all of which were small in scale and three of which involved only single organisational settings. St John-Brooks (2009; 2010) surveyed 123 internal coaches about ethical dilemmas they had experienced as coaches. Seventy-one coaches identified 139 dilemmas which predominantly related to conflict between their coach role and their organisational responsibilities, confidentiality and boundary management. However, it was not clear how significant the coaches felt these dilemmas were, and St John-Brooks acknowledged that many of the dilemmas identified were equally relevant to external coaches working in organisations. Leonard-Cross (2010) reported the responses of 52 internal coaches from a single organisation to a three-question survey about the effect of coaching on their self-efficacy, part of a study whose main focus was coachee self-efficacy. Mukherjee (2012) reported on a single organisation study involving 19 managers who acted as coaches. Forty coaches were trained but only the 19 included in the study met the minimum inclusion criteria of carrying out 12 coaching sessions with 3 coachees over 6-9 months. This suggests that the amount of coaching experience the coaches involved had was limited. Mukherjee (2012) looked for changes in participants' interpersonal skills before and after their coaching experience and asked participants what they had gained personally as a result of being a coach. And finally, Feehily (2018) carried out an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) of interviews with 4 coaches from a single organisation to examine the sense they made of their coach experience.

The need for further research on internal coaches was therefore compelling: the increasing reliance organisations placed on internal coaches to deliver their coaching needs; the focus of coaching research on process, outcomes and benefits rather than on those who carried out the coaching; the paucity of research conducted on internal coaches to date; and the lack of knowledge about how internal coaches experienced their coach role.

Aims of the study

The purpose of the current research is, by generating a better understanding of the internal coach experience and the impact it has on those who take on the coach role, to improve the practice of internal coaching. The primary aim of the research is to address the question: How does the experience of being an internal coach impact the coach? Additionally, the research seeks to answer four sub-questions

- What factors impact internal coaches' motivations to become and remain coaches?
- What place does coaching occupy in internal coaches' professional lives?

- How do internal coaches experience and interpret the attitudes of stakeholders towards their coaching?
- What steps do internal coaches take to manage their coach role alongside their other organisational responsibilities?

Research methodology

The research methodology I adopted was a mixed methods study in two phases: a survey of internal coaches via an on-line questionnaire followed by one-to-one interviews. Gaining access to the internal coach group was a key challenge as no register was available of either the organisations who had internal coaches or of the coaches themselves. It was not possible therefore to define the internal coach population or to establish a sampling frame. The strategy adopted was to treat internal coaches as a hard-to-reach population (Eland-Goossensen et al, 1997; Faugier and Sargeant, 1997; Handcock and Gile, 2011; Heckathorn, 2011). A snowball sample was propagated by recruiting 39 gatekeepers to recruit internal coaches from their networks to take part in the research. An on-line questionnaire was developed to survey internal coaches' perspectives on their coach role and the link to it distributed via these gatekeepers along with an explanatory letter. Because almost no research data was available on how internal coaches experienced their coach role research findings on a parallel group, mentors, was used to inform the content of the questionnaire. Once I had made contact with coaches, I sought volunteers to take part in a further phase of the research: one-to-one interviews. Interviews were conducted at coach's place of work. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) of the interview transcripts was used to identify themes within the interviews. Transcription and analysis took place in parallel with interviewing and the decision to stop the interviews was taken when no new insights appeared to be emerging. The outcome was that 484 internal coaches responded to the questionnaire and 20 of these coaches were interviewed, making this, to the best of my knowledge, the largest study of internal coaches so far conducted.

The research methodology adopted can be represented by the formula "quant→QUAL" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018), meaning that a quantitative method (survey questionnaire) was deployed first, followed by a qualitative method (interviews) which explored the findings from the initial survey, and that the qualitative method was the dominant data source. This is perhaps best explained using an archaeological metaphor. The territory of this research, coaching in organisations, could be visualised as a large field. There was little visible evidence of what lay beneath the surface, and though there were lots of opinions about what the field contained there was very little research

evidence to support these opinions. In the first phase of the research a large area of the territory was scanned with an on-line survey, the way an archaeologist would use ground penetrating radar to survey the field. Based upon analysis of the scan data decisions were taken as to where to explore more deeply and 20 trenches were dug: one-to-one interviews. Much of the richness unearthed about the experience of being an internal coach came from these trenches/interviews. But the effectiveness of these excavations was due to the initial survey which identified the most promising places to dig. Overall, the study has produced a rich data set which generated new insights into how internal coaches experience their coach role and the impact their experience had on them.

Thesis structure

In this chapter I have defined the focus of my research, internal coaches, and described the reasons for wanting to conduct this research: a combination of personal curiosity based upon my own experience as an internal coach and concern about the lack of research conducted to date on this important group. I have set out my aim in conducting this research, to explore how internal coaches experience their coach role and understand how the role impacts them and outlined the research methodology I adopted to pursue this research aim.

In chapter 2 the current literature on coaching is reviewed to establish the significance of coaching in organisations and the role assigned to internal coaches in the delivery of that coaching. Key concepts from role theory are drawn on to examine the implications for coaches of adding the internal coach role to their existing organisational responsibilities. The current, limited research into internal coaches' experiences is critically reviewed and the literature on a parallel role, that of the mentor, is examined to explore what this research can contribute to the current study.

The research methodology employed in this study is set out in chapter 3. Initially I discuss key influences on the design of the research and then go on to describe what was done. Firstly, I set out the philosophical stance taken in this research, that of interpretivism; its influence on what the study focussed upon and on the research design adopted. I then discuss how I handled being both researcher and an active internal coach. In the second part of the chapter I describe the two research methods employed – survey questionnaire and interviews – setting out the approach taken to participant recruitment, questionnaire and interview guide design, data collection and data analysis.

Chapter 4 is the first of two chapters in which the findings from the research are described. In this chapter the findings from the survey are set out: the responses of 484 internal coaches who completed all or part of an on-line questionnaire. The data relate to the nature of participants coaching practice, their reasons for becoming an internal coach, and their experience of being an

internal coach in relation to support received for their coach role, recognition of its value, and the benefits of coaching to the coach. The analysis indicates many coaches' shared experience of having the support and freedom they need to coach, and their belief in the value of their coaching to others and the intrinsic reward they experience as a result. But the analysis also raises a number of questions: why do many coaches restrict the amount of coaching they do? Why are many coaches determined to continue coaching even though they feel that the contribution their coaching makes is not formally recognised? These questions and others were explored during subsequent interviews.

In chapter 5 the results of the thematic analysis of those interviews with 20 coaches are described. Six themes and several sub-themes are identified. These relate to the ways in which becoming a coach changes the coaches, their belief in the importance of coaching, the impact on coaches of stakeholder attitudes towards their coaching, including the attitude of their line manager, and their attitude towards colleagues who wanted to become an internal coach. The analysis identifies the importance of coaching to these coaches and the steps they take to protect their coaching role.

In chapter 6 the findings set out in chapters 4 and 5 are interpreted and discussed in relation to the literature reviewed in chapter 2. Firstly, how the experience of being a coach changed the coaches interviewed is discussed, and the way in which coaching has been incorporated into their lives as a result is set out. Secondly, the internal coaches' experiences of key stakeholders are explored, and the steps the coaches took to protect their coach role, based upon these stakeholder attitudes, is discussed. Based upon this review it is proposed that the internal coach role is different for those on the inside, than it appears viewed from the outside.

The contribution to knowledge made by this study is set out in the final chapter, 7. Five aspects of the internal coach experience highlighted by this study are set out: the role of prior experience in the decision to become a coach; the extent to which coaching in integrated into coaches' professional and personal lives; how the environment shapes the approach coaches take to their practice; the tacit agreement between the coach and their line manager not to discuss coaching; and how coaches act to protect their freedom to coach. A number of implications and recommendations for coaching practice arising from the study's findings are then discussed. A key limitation of the study, the nature of the sample achieved, is then acknowledged, and a number of suggestions made for further research into this important group. Finally, I return to the personal question which prompted me to undertake this research, was my experience of being an internal coach unique to me or shared by other internal coaches, and reflect on my view today, almost six years on.

Chapter 2

Internal Coaching in Organisations: A Literature Review

Introduction

This thesis addresses the question: How does the experience of being an internal coach impact the coach? This chapter examines our current knowledge and understanding of coaching in organisations, and specifically the role of the internal coach in providing that coaching. As coaching takes a number of forms - Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) identified 9 main approaches, including sports coaching, life coaching and team coaching, whilst Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck (2010) set out 13 theoretical approaches and 10 genres and contexts of coaching – it is appropriate to first clarify what form of coaching will be discussed in this chapter.

The focus of this chapter is one-to-one coaching taking place in organisations. This is delivered in several ways: by an external coach, an internal coach, either part-time or full-time, or a manager-as-coach (Carter, 2005). The specific focus of this research is on part-time internal coaches who are defined as being recognised as coaches within their organisation, working with coachees drawn from their organisation but who are outside of the coach's chain of command, and that coaching is additional to and separate from their day-job, not their main role in the organisation. A manager-as-coach, someone who adopts a coaching style of management in their dealings with subordinates and colleagues, is outside the scope of this thesis. Similarly, full-time internal coaches for whom coaching is their day-job, albeit within the organisation for which they work, are out of scope. The external coach is someone who offers their services as a coach to a client, usually for a fee. Their relationship with the client and client organisation is usually defined by, and limited to, the coaching contract. Much of the literature relating to internal coaches discusses internal coaches in relation to external coaches, and so external coaches will be discussed in this chapter. As will be already apparent, being an internal coach involves taking on an additional role within the organisation and engaging with additional stakeholders who have a vested interest in, and expectations of the coach's role. The theoretical framework offered by role theory, the study of roles, will therefore be used to explore the internal coach literature.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section, *Coaching in Organisations,* examines the significance of coaching in organisations, reviewing how coaching in organisations has evolved, its function, and the role assigned to internal coaches for the delivery of coaching. The review will not focus on the act of coaching, but on those who perform the act. The second section, *Role theory: A theoretical framework with which to explore internal coaching,* draws on key concepts from role theory relating to stakeholders and their expectations, and the potential for conflict when performing more than one role. These concepts are used to examine the implications for the internal coach of adding the coach role to their existing organisational responsibilities, the organisational support necessary for coaching to take place, and the potential impact of stakeholders in the wider

coaching industry on coaching in organisations and the internal coach. The last section, *The experience of being an internal coach,* reviews the limited evidence available that seeks to understand what it means to be an internal coach. Because research on the experience of being an internal coach is so limited this section will also review the literature on a similar role, that of the mentor, to determine whether the research carried out to understand what motivates mentors to do their role can contribute to our understanding of the internal coach role.

Coaching in Organisations

Whilst coaching can and does take place in a wide range of settings, coaching in organisations has been hugely significant in the development and growth of the coaching field as a whole (Cox, Bachkirova and Clutterbuck, 2010), and of the literature which shapes our current understanding of coaching. In this section that literature is examined to establish the importance of coaching in organisations and the significance of internal coaches in the delivery of that coaching. The reasons for the emergence of internal coaches, and the way that their role is described and positioned is explored.

Establishing an important role in organisations

> Over the last decade both [coaching and mentoring] have developed from esoteric activity on the fringes of mainstream learning and development, to central elements of workplace learning in a huge range of organisations. Coaching and mentoring are now the norm in a majority of corporate organisations, and are widespread in the public and voluntary sectors. (Gray, Garvey and Lane, 2016 p. xi)

This statement claims that coaching has established its place at the heart of employee development in organisations, if only relatively recently. Brock (2014; 2011) provides a chronology of the deployment of coaching in organisations. She traces the advent of coaching in the business world to the 1970's, a view supported by Gray, Garvey and Lane (2016). Prior to this period, she acknowledges some counselling of business leaders by therapists taking place. At this time the literature on coaching was very limited. The 1980's saw the first companies offering coaching services appear and the first coach training courses established. It is at this time that Grant (2017 p. 40) sees coaching starting to "gain a foothold" in organisations. Hawkins (2012) believes that at this time coaching was a remedial activity: the outsourcing of difficult conversations. On Brock's (2014; 2011) timeline the 1990's saw significant expansion of coaching related activities: an increase in the number of courses specifically for the training of coaches; the first professional coaching bodies established; significant growth in the literature published on coaching. The 1990's also saw the first internal coaches appointed, at Ernst

and Young and IBM (Brock, 2014). At this time Grant (2017) sees the focus of coaching being performance management, managing poor performers, though as the decade progressed, he detects a shift in the use of coaching towards the development of employees' social and communications skills. Hawkins (2012) notes the move to coaching having a developmental focus during this period.

The first peer reviewed coaching journals were published in the 2000's, part of a big expansion in the coaching literature corpus (Brock, 2014; 2011). There was further expansion in the number of professional coaching bodies, coaching companies and coach training organisations, and coaching psychology special interest groups were set up in the UK and Australia. It is also during this period that the term 'coaching culture'[1] entered organisational language (Brock, 2014; 2011). Grant (2017) labels this period the '2nd generation' of coaching in organisations, characterised by formalisation of coaching conversations, greater use of model-based approaches and greater focus upon skills development and talent management. Hawkins (2012) highlights during this period the shift towards greater in-house sourcing of coaching skills by organisations: the rise of the manager-as-coach. Brock (2011) pinpoints the tipping point in the emergence of coaching around 2000, "when coaching became well known and 'commodified'" (p. 60). So, although there are traces of coaching in organisations going back 50 years, it has really become established in the last 15-20 years, and is still relatively new.

Over the last 15 years the growth of coaching has prompted the launch of a number of surveys to track and understand its development in organisations. For example, in the UK the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has surveyed its members about learning and development (L&D) in their organisations, and about coaching. Ninety percent of participants (n=598) in their 2009 survey of coaching activity (CIPD, 2009) reported that coaching was taking place in their organisation, and of these, 70% said that expenditure on coaching was either stable or growing. The 2011 coaching survey (CIPD, 2011a), (n=332), reported slightly lower proportions - 75% of organisations using coaching; 55% reporting expenditure stable or growing - though of those organisations using coaching in 2011 80% reported that the use of coaching had increased since 2009 (CIPD, 2011a). Similarly, a broader survey of L&D in organisations conducted the same year (CIPD, 2011b) found that 86% of participants (n=601) reported using coaching within their L&D offering. It is not clear whether the slightly reduced level of coaching activity reported is significant, though these findings may reflect the economic pressures faced by organisations following the 2009 financial crisis. Indeed, Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) believe that this crisis was a stimulus to the increased use of internal coaches by organisations, in an effort to reduce expenditure. A later L&D survey (CIPD, 2015) also reported similar findings: n=541; 78% use coaching (89% of public sector

[1] Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005: 19) define a coaching culture as one where "coaching is the predominant style of managing and working together, and where a commitment to grow the organisation is embedded in a parallel commitment to grow the people in the organisation."

organisations); further 13% planning to offer coaching in the next 12 months. Whilst these findings cannot be extrapolated to all organisations, they do indicate that coaching is widely deployed by organisations, and relatively resilient to financial pressures.

From its origins in the 1970's when a small number of therapists sought to extend their practices by counselling business leaders, the use of coaches in organisations has grown significantly, and an industry has grown up to serve organisations' needs: coaching is a commercial business. Estimates of the number of coaches and the value of coaching vary and can only be regarded as indicative because of the need to extrapolate from limited data sets, but the number of coaches globally has been estimated as 30,000, in 2006 (Grant et al, 2010), 43,000 to 44,000 (Bresser, 2009), and 53,300 (ICF, 2016). This last figure, calculated based upon an International Coach Federation (ICF) survey, is said to include both external coaches and internal coaches. Estimates of the value of the coaching industry range from US$1.5 billion (Grant et al, 2010), US$2.0 billion (Fillery-Travis and Lane, 2006), to US$2.4 billion (ICF, 2016). The commercial nature of coaching means that professional coaches, and the professional bodies that support them are key stakeholders in the practice of coaching in organisations.

The widespread deployment of coaching by organisations comes at a cost, so what do organisations get in return for their investment? There are numerous descriptions of what coaching does (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2009). Hamlin, Ellinger, and Beattie (2008), drawing on and extending earlier literature reviews by Grant (2001) and Joo (2005) identified 36 definitions of coaching. These variously emphasised performance improvement (Burdett, 1998; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Grant, 2006; Parsloe, 1992) and skills development (Clutterbuck, 1998; Orenstein, 2002); facilitating learning (Parsloe, 1992; Mink, Owen and Mink, 1993) and self-directed learning (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004); goal achievement (Clegg, Rhodes and Kornberger, 2003; Dingman, 2006; Storey, 2003); raising self-awareness (Bacon and Spear, 2003; Caplan, 2003); improving organisational performance (Dingman, 2006; Kilberg, 2000; Zeus and Skiffington, 2000); or changing the coachee's life (Grant, 2001; Richardson, 2004; Zeus and Skiffington, 2000). Hamlin, Ellinger and Beattie (2008) attempted a synthesis of these definitions, concluding that the purpose of coaching is to improve coachee performance, enhance their personal capability and achieve personal and organisational goals.

This view of the purpose of coaching being to improve performance is supported by an analysis of the coaching literature by Garvey (2011) which examined the periods 1983 to 2000 and 2000 to 2010. This indicated that the focus of researchers (as indicated by articles published in peer reviewed journals) during both periods was on learning and development (L&D) rather than on performance and goals: approximately ten times more publications focused on L&D than on

performance in both periods. However, when considering all coaching literature during the two periods, that is including the practitioner and advocacy articles, he noted that whilst between 1983 and 2000 there were approximately six times the number of publications relating to L&D compared to performance and goals, during 2000 to 2010 there was a huge increase in the literature focussed upon performance and goals, with as many articles focussed on this area as there were on L&D: the focus of the literature had shifted towards performance. Garvey's conclusion is in line with survey evidence. The main purposes identified for coaching by those who commission coaching in organisations are performance improvement and leadership development (CIPD, 2009; 2011a; 2011b; Ridler report, 2016); performance improvement encompassing skill and capability improvement, building upon good performance, and managing poor performance (CIPD, 2009; 2011a). Gray, Garvey and Lane (2016) conclude that the primary focus of coaching is now on performance improvement.

From their review of definitions of coaching Hamlin, Ellinger and Beattie (2008) conclude that as well as aiming to achieve personal goals for the coachee, coaching within an organisational context is generally also aimed at achieving organisational or business goals: there is an expectation that improved organisational performance will result. Lee (2003) asserts that the change coaching is to bring about is for the benefit of the organisation, not just the coachee. For some this organisational benefit is to be achieved by helping the coachee to do their job, whether current or future, better (Hunt and Weintraub, 2007), but Western (2012 p. 44) assigns the coach the task of "focussing on both personal and organisational success." Arguably, the responsibility of the coach towards the organisation is taken even further by Kilburg (2000) when he suggests that coach and coachee have a shared responsibility to identify goals that will improve the coachee's performance and thereby improve the organisation's effectiveness. These positions make clear the view that the coachee is not the only stakeholder in the coaching. Indeed, some researchers report tension between the needs of the individual and those of the organisation. For example, Blackman (2006) found little overlap between the personal goals of coachees for coaching and the goals those coachees felt their organisation would have. A study by Knights and Poppleton (2008) and systematic review of research literature by Blackman, Moscardo and Gray (2016) both identified tension between the benefit the individual gets from being coached and the gain for the organisation.

The evidence of widespread use of coaching by organisations suggests strongly that coaching is believed to be effective, but what is the evidence that supports this? Sherman and Freas (2004 p. 82) likened coaching to the Wild West: "largely unexplored" but "immensely promising": a call for greater understanding of what coaching does. These sentiments were echoed by others; coaching was believed to work, but the evidence to support this belief was limited (Feldman and Lankau, 2005; Fillery-Travis and Lane, 2006; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2009; Joo, 2005). A decade on Gray,

Garvey and Lane (2016 p. 266) state that research into coaching has not yet caught up with practice when they say

> Despite the rapid growth in coaching […] it is a paradox that [coaching] remain[s] relatively unsupported by robust empirical research. […] [W]hile research is certainly on the increase, it has lagged behind the practice of coaching, to [coaching's] detriment.

In recent years a number of meta-analyses and systematic reviews of the coaching research literature have been conducted to try to determine whether coaching is effective (Athanasopoulou and Dopson, 2018; Blackman, Moscardo and Gray, 2016; Grover and Furnham, 2016; Jones, Woods and Guillaume, 2016; Theeboom, Beersma and van Vianen, 2014). This work suggests that coaching does have a positive effect on a range of outcomes. For example, a meta-analysis of 18 studies by Theeboom, Beersma and van Vianen (2014) sought to address the question "Does coaching work when provided in an organisational context by professionally trained coaches?" (p. 2) by examining the effect of coaching on five categories: performance and skills; well-being; coping; work attitudes; and goal-directed self-regulation. Their conclusion was that coaching has a significant positive effect on all these categories, though they found that there was significant variation in effect between studies. Theeboom and colleagues did however acknowledge that most of the studies they examined relied on self-assessment of outcomes and that the findings were based upon a small number of studies. Another meta-analysis by Jones, Woods and Guillaume (2016) focussed upon coaching in the workplace and included studies involving both external and internal coaches (but not manager-as-coach); seventeen studies met the criteria set. They examined the impact of coaching on affective outcomes (e.g. self-efficacy, well-being and satisfaction), skill-based outcomes, and individual-level results outcomes, finding coaching had a positive effect on all three, but that the strongest effect was on individual-level results. Again, the number of studies upon which the analysis was based overall was recognised as a limitation of the study.

The meta-analysis approach has been criticised because the limited number of studies that can be included makes a comprehensive review of the coaching research evidence impossible (Blackman, Moscardo and Gray, 2016), and a number of researchers have sought to determine whether coaching is an effective intervention by conducting systematic reviews of the research literature. For example, Grover and Furnham (2016) conducted a systematic literature review of organisational coaching research papers published since 2003 (n=52). They found that their analysis did "lean towards coaching being an effective intervention" (p. 23) which supports the individual in terms of self-efficacy and goal attainment and supports the organisation by improving management behaviours and positively impacting subordinate experience. Blackman, Moscardo and Gray (2016)

reviewed 111 business coaching research papers and also concluded that there was evidence that coaching is an effective development tool, whilst Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018) reviewed 84 papers reporting on executive coaching and found that 70 of the 84 reported positive outcomes. However, concern was expressed that the evidence to support organisational coaching effectiveness is still limited (Blackman, Moscardo and Gray, 2016; Grover and Furnham, 2016) and remains largely based upon participants' self-reported assessments (Blackman, Moscardo and Gray, 2016; Ely et al, 2010).

In spite of the evident importance placed on coaching, and the concerns expressed by researchers that the evidence base to support coaching remains limited, evaluation of the success or value of the coaching intervention by organisations remains rudimentary. Early surveys indicated that participant testimony was the main assessment tool (CIPD, 2009; 2011a) and the most recent Ridler report (2016) still found that the three most used methods to evaluate coaching were subjective assessment against the coaching objectives (74%), coach feedback (63%), and coachee satisfaction score (62%), suggesting that little has changed.

From modest beginnings in the 1970's, coaching has become established in many organisations, its primary focus being to achieve organisational benefit through improvement in individuals' performances. This growth of coaching in organisations has been matched by the growth of a coaching industry to support and promote the use of coaching by organisations. The financial implications of delivering coaching in organisations has resulted in organisations taking steps to control costs, and one outcome of this has been the emergence of the internal coach.

The deployment of internal coaches by organisations

Though initially coaching services were bought-in by organisations, from the 1990's internal coaches began to be employed, and today, in most organisations, the provision of coaching is shared between internal and external coaches (CIPD, 2009; 2011a; 2015; ICF, 2016; Ridler report, 2009; 2011; 2013; 2016). Research reported by Carter and Miller (2009) found that investment in internal coaching schemes was the biggest area of growth for coaching in large organisations. Further, the trend reported is for the increasing use of internal coaches (Ridler report, 2009; 2011; 2013; 2016; Sherpa Executive Coaching Survey, 2016). A survey by the CIPD found that internal coaches are reported to have the primary responsibility for delivering coaching in more organisations than are external coaches (CIPD, 2011a). The key driver reported for the use of internal coaches is cost (Ridler report, 2011). The 2013 Ridler Report found that 44% of organisations surveyed agreed that internal coaches were better value for money than external coaches, with only 13% disagreeing. Internal coach

deployment is seen as a means of coping with increasing demand for coaching and budget constraints (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Frisch, 2001; Ridler Report, 2008).

Frisch (2001) was one of the first to note the emergence of internal coaches, saying "quietly and without fanfare, the role of the internal coach has achieved recognition in some large organisations as valuable in its own right" (p. 241). However, four years later he expressed concern that internal coaching was "flying under the radar of mainstream coaching" (Frisch, 2005 p. 23), with little focus on internal coaches and little written about internal coaching. St John Brooks (2014; 2010) believes that it is no longer true that internal coaching is invisible but acknowledges that the bulk of the literature on internal coaching is advocacy based, written by practitioners who are either linked in some way to an internal coaching scheme or provide coach training to organisations setting up a coaching scheme. This view is supported by Ebrahimi and Cameron (2012) who, in searching the coaching literature found that there has been very little research reported on internal coaching. Garvey, Stokes and Megginson's (2009) critique of coaching research, that it is "fragmented, partisan and impressionistic" (p. 40), often based on insider accounts of individual schemes written by those with a vested interest and focussing on positive outcomes, seems particularly appropriate applied to the internal coaching literature (see for example McKee, Tilin and Mason, 2009). However, it is this literature which informs and shapes our view of internal coaching and it cannot therefore be ignored.

An internal coach is an employee of the organisation, but for them coaching is a formal role, separate to their day-job, unless they are a full-time coach. Internal coaching is described as a one-to-one developmental activity provided by one colleague for another (Frisch, 2001; St John-Brooks, 2014), though the coach sits outside the coachee's chain of command and is not involved in the management of the coachee (Carter and Miller, 2009; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Frisch, 2001; St John-Brooks, 2014). This point clearly separates the internal coach from manager-as-coach, and yet the two approaches are still conflated by some in the literature (for example Tompkins, 2018). Internal coaches can be full-time coaches (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016), but more usually coach part-time alongside their day-job (Carter, 2005; Carter and Miller, 2009; St John-Brooks, 2014). A survey of 123 internal coaches by St John-Brooks (2014; 2010) found that 5% were full-time coaches, whilst 41% coached for fewer than 5 hours per month, 35% for between 5 and 10 hours per month, 9% for between 10 and 20 hours and 15% for more than 20 hours. Frisch (2001) states that becoming an internal coach involves formal training and that the role is recognised and supported by the organisation. St John-Brooks (2014) makes the point that this support must include the coach's line manager who has to authorise their release to be trained as a coach. She highlights that internal coaching involves stakeholders beyond those being coached when she states her belief that internal coaches have two clients, the coachee and the organisation. Further, she believes that being an

internal coach is the same as being an external coach, with all that implies about maintenance of their practice and responsibilities towards those they coach.

Frisch (2001) also regards the internal coach as comparable in all ways to an external coach, except that they are an employee of the same organisation as their coachees. They need the same skills as an external coach (Frisch, 2001; Hunt and Weintraub, 2007; Strumpf, 2002) and the same ongoing development of their practice (Frisch, 2005; Frost, 2007; Hunt and Weintraub, 2007; Maxwell, 2011; St John-Brooks, 2010). Maxwell (2011) suggests that this is because an internal coach offers an equivalent service to an external coach, that they are subject to the same risks related to competency, ethical dilemmas and management of boundaries, and must therefore operate to the same standards and be subject to the same scrutiny. She believes that the argument for coaches to have supervision – development and quality assurance of practice, and personal support – is the same for external and internal coaches; the position also taken, in Europe at least, by the professional bodies (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013). Frost (2007) suggests that the commitment to ongoing development of practice required makes it important that those selected as internal coaches "are prepared to make time to coach and consider it as important as the 'day-job'" (p. 55). He suggests that internal coaches need to be able to work a minimum of 6 to 8 hours per month on their coaching and their development as coaches.

When it comes to the recruitment of internal coaches St John-Brooks (2014) has advocated a range of selection criteria including assessment of a candidate's skills and capabilities, personal development commitment, self-awareness, interest in the development of others and line manager support. Hawkins (2012) stressed the importance of identifying the required competencies, capabilities and capacity new coaches should possess. In addition, Keddy and Johnson (2011) noted that the Metropolitan Police Service also questioned applicants whose motive appeared to be to acquire another skill, presumably concerned that their application was driven by self-interest, though beyond this example that applicants' motivations to become a coach might be inappropriate appears not to be highlighted by those writing about setting up a coaching scheme. Factors motivating employees to become internal coaches have been identified which relate to 'self' and 'other'. Knights and Poppleton (2008) reported that access to high quality training and development opportunities was a factor in volunteers' decision to become a coach, and Feehily (2018) found that volunteers saw coaching as a way of "addressing dissatisfying features of their own roles" (p. 78); that becoming a coach was a vehicle to achieve change in their work-life. Knights and Poppleton (2008) also identified that volunteers were motivated by a desire to support the development of others, and Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) believe that some internal coaches come to coaching through their interest in utilising a collaborative style of management. Knights and Poppleton (2008) found that

these motivating factors meant that organisations were able to attract volunteers to be internal coaches without offering either remuneration or reduction in day-job workload, though Rock and Donde (2008a) suggest that the way to motivate leaders to coach is to help them understand what is in it for them: a way of getting better performance from subordinates; being able to deal with their children better; a skill they can use in semi-retirement; and that being a coach increases an individual's status.

Frisch was perhaps the first to author a substantive paper about internal coaching (Frisch, 2001), based upon interviews with 10 internal coaches. The views he set out then continue to dominate our perspective on the benefits and limitations of internal coaches. He saw the key advantages of using internal coaches as being lower cost (than buying in the services of external coaches) enabling wider deployment of coaching within the organisation, coaches' insider knowledge enabling them to make progress more quickly initially, the ability to observe their coachee at work and to be able to provide feedback during coaching therefore, and that internal coaches are a visible manifestation of the 'learning organisation'. Frisch (2001) saw external coaches as having the advantage of 'cleaner' relationships as they have no other link to the person they are coaching, whereas an internal coach might, and that therefore confidentiality or trust issues are unlikely to arise. In his paper (2001) he sees the internal and external coach roles as complementary rather than competing: "two sides of the same coin" (p. 243). However, in a follow-up paper he modified his position, and suggested that internal coaches provide competition for external coaches, helping to keep them focussed (Frisch, 2005). For Frisch cost was the driver for the emergence of internal coaches (2001) and maintenance of confidentiality the key challenge they always face (2005; 2001). As a result, he believed that the use of internal coaches would never be applicable to all situations (Frisch, 2005). Frisch's views of the key advantages of internal and external coaches are still generally acknowledged (Carter, 2005; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; St John-Brooks, 2014).

As stated above, cost was the main factor driving the emergence of internal coaches (Frisch, 2001). Containing costs by creating a group of internal coaches is seen as enabling coaching to be made available lower down the organisation than would otherwise be the case, supporting the development of a coaching culture (McKee, Tilin and Mason, 2009). Carter and Miller (2009) quoted the BBC as estimating that the cost of coaching by internal coaches is only £50 per hour (circa £70 in 2020), and Rock and Donde (2008a) suggest that an internal coach might be only 10% of the cost of an external coach. However, Hunt and Weintraub (2007 p. 148) caution that "the 'fact' that internal coaching is less costly than external coaching reflects an untested assumption." They suggest that the need for training and ongoing development of internal coaches means that their lower cost is not a given. However, cost remains the main reason given by those responsible for coaching services in

organisations (Ridler Report, 2013). Additionally, St John-Brooks (2014) has suggested as well as being lower cost, that for internal coaches there is no financial incentive to prolong coaching, reducing the risk of unnecessary costs being incurred.

Since Frisch (2001), other advantages and drawbacks of internal versus external coaches have been postulated. It is suggested that the logistics of managing internal coaches is less complex (Rock and Donde, 2008a) and time consuming (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016) than for external coaches, that internal coaches are more readily available and contactable, and are more responsive to the organisation's needs (St John-Brooks, 2014). Internal coaches have a better understanding of the coachee's context (St John-Brooks, 2014), have knowledge and understanding of their organisation (Rock and Donde, 2008a) and its culture (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016). Internal coaches can also be role models to other managers (Carter, 2005; St John-Brooks, 2014) and create networks that spread the impact of coaching (Rock and Donde, 2008a). McKee, Tilin and Mason (2009) believe that coaches make better managers and have a positive impact on organisational culture through their coaching leadership style. Whilst Frost (2007) saw training managers to be coaches as a way of engaging them in leadership talent development. Rock and Donde (2008a) believe that using internal coaches reduces the risk of both those coached and those doing the coaching leaving the organisation. Further, they state that "teaching leaders to formally coach others helps build sustainable leaders, reducing burnout and increasing performance" (p. 14).

As well as the argued advantages of internal coaches, disadvantages (or advantages of using external coaches) have also been suggested. External coaches are felt to have a greater breadth of experience (Carter, 2005; St John-Brooks, 2014), or put the other way around, internal coaches lack external experience, knowing only their own organisation (Mihiotis and Argirou, 2016). External coaches have greater experience of political issues (St John-Brooks, 2014; Strumpf, 2002). It is also suggested that external coaches are likely to offer more challenging perspectives (Carter, 2005), to say what cannot be said internally (St John-Brooks, 2014). Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) see a disadvantage of internal coaches that they are likely to be less challenging, and to defer to power, though they admit that they have found no evidence of this in practice. It is interesting to note that of the four disadvantages of internal coaches that Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) cite – credibility with senior managers; less challenging; conflict of interest; and less commitment to professional development – they acknowledge that they have no evidence to support the latter three, and that there may be some evidence that the opposite is true for the last disadvantage cited. Schalk and Landeta (2017) constructed 15 propositions based upon their review of the literature on the pros and cons of internal and external coaches. These propositions were explored with three groups – external coaches, internal coaches and executive coachees – using a modified Delphi methodology. It

is perhaps not surprising that they found significant disagreement between internal and external coaches and executive coachees on the propositions that internal coaches have greater impact across the organisation than external coaches, that external coaches are more trusted than internal coaches, that internal coaches facilitate the retention of executives, that internal coaches are lower cost, and that internal coaches make faster progress initially because of their insider knowledge. With the exception of the average scores for the proposition 'internal coaches make faster progress initially because of their insider knowledge', where executive coachee and internal coach scores were aligned and higher than the eternal coach score, the average executive coachee score for these propositions aligned with the external coach perspective rather than the internal coach.

Whilst there is broad agreement that internal coaches have the same requirements to manage their practice as external coaches, there appear to be two camps when it comes to considering whether internal coaches can be as capable as external coaches. The difference pivots around whether psychological knowledge or business acumen is considered most important (Feldman and Lankau, 2005). Coaching psychology school adherents advocate the need for training and qualifications in psychological disciplines such as counselling or psychotherapy (Carter, 2005; Frisch, 2001). This was emphasised by Fillery-Travis and Lane (2008; 2006) when they created a hierarchy of capability, with external coaches at the top by virtue of their superior knowledge and skills, being able to handle a free, developmental focussed agenda, whereas internal coaches were seen as needing a narrower remit, a more limited and defined agenda. The other camp sees internal coaches as able to deliver the same coaching service as external coaches, and as having key advantages such as understanding the business they work in (Rock and Donde, 2008a; St John-Brooks, 2014). A systematic review of the coaching literature by Blackman, Moscardo and Gray (2016) found that although there were supporters for the primacy of both psychological knowledge and business acumen, the evidence from the 111 studies reviewed suggests that skills or expertise in the relevant business sector or in management are preferred.

Jones, Woods and Guillaume (2016) conducted a meta-analysis of research on workplace coaching and hypothesised that coaching provided by an external coach would be shown to have a greater impact on outcomes than coaching provided by an internal coach. However, their analysis showed that whilst both internal and external coaches had a positive effect on coachee learning and performance, the impact of coaching by internal coaches was stronger than for external coaches. They suggest that this might be because internal coaches have a greater understanding of their organisation and are therefore better able to help the coachee within their specific context. They do, however, advise caution given the low number of studies (internal coach n=3; external coach n=13) involving internal coaches in their analysis. A subsequent study by Jones, Woods and Zhou (2018), which tested

the impact of internal versus external coaches on affective outcomes – work well-being – and a systematic literature review by Blackman, Moscardo and Gray (2016) found in contrast that the credibility and effectiveness of the coach are greater if they are external to the organisation. Jones, Woods and Zhou (2018) suggest that working with an external coach might enable greater coachee disclosure because of the belief that confidentiality is more assured. So, there is as yet little consensus about the relative effectiveness of coaching delivered by internal versus external coaches.

Internal coaches are increasingly the means by which coaching is delivered in organisations; cost and increasing capacity the main reasons given. But Frisch (2001) casts a long shadow over internal coaching; his view of what an internal coach is and can do, the pros and cons of their use, still largely defining them two decades on. Lower cost and organisational knowledge are seen as their key advantages; but being an insider is also their Achilles heel: limited experience; maintenance of confidentiality; gaining trust. However, little research has been conducted on internal coaches relative to coaching as a whole; the picture painted being based largely on practitioner advocacy. As Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) admit, some of the assertions about internal coaches, though often repeated are not supported by evidence.

So far, this review has established that coaching plays an important role in organisations, and that internal coaches are increasingly key to how that coaching is delivered. It has also started to highlight that a range of stakeholders, linked to the organisation and the wider coaching industry, have a vested interest in and impact on the role of the internal coach. In the next section role theory, a body of knowledge developed from the study of roles and the interaction of role holders with their stakeholders will be used to explore the impact of these stakeholder interactions on coaching and internal coaches.

Role theory: A theoretical framework with which to explore internal coaching

The foregoing discussion of coaching in organisations has highlighted that being an internal coach means taking on an additional role to the coach's other organisational responsibilities and engaging with new stakeholders who have an interest in this coaching role. The study of roles, or role theory, has almost a century of development behind it, and potentially offers a theoretical framework with which to explore interactions of this nature. However, to date it appears not to have been applied to the understanding of the role of the internal coach, though at least one of its key concepts, role

conflict, has been invoked. For example, St John-Brooks (2014; 2010) states that internal coaches face a number of dilemmas as coaches that are the result of them having a day-job alongside their coaching role, implying that conflict arises as a result of attempting to perform both roles.

The role concept, and role theory, developed out of a theatrical or dramaturgical metaphor (Biddle, 1986); that parts are played by actors, based upon a script and in the presence of an audience who have expectations about how the actors will play their parts. Therefore, Biddle (1986 p. 68) states that role theory is concerned with three concepts: "patterned and characteristic social behaviours, parts or identities that are assumed by social participants, and scripts or expectations for behaviour that are understood by all and agreed to by performers." He believed that the concept of role is widely used, noting at that time that it was used in more than 10% of articles published in sociological journals; that "role theory provides a perspective for discussing or studying social issues" (p. 68). The interest in role theory across a range of disciplines has resulted in a number of role theory perspectives being developed (see Biddle (1986) for a summary of five of the main perspectives), a major one being organisational role theory, first articulated by Gross, Mason and McEachern (1958) and Kahn et al (1964). Organisational role theory pays attention to the expectations, both formal and informal, placed upon people in roles and, as a result, a key focus of organisational role theory has been the potential for conflict to arise (Biddle, 1986). Within organisational role theory Katz and Kahn (1978 p. 186) define a role as the "summation of the requirements with which the system confronts the individual member." Mullins (2016) also believes that the role played is influenced by situational factors, but, additionally, that it is also influenced by personal factors: the values, attitudes, motivation and ability of the role holder.

Role theory has been criticised for the lack of alignment and consensus on definitions of some of the key concepts employed (Biddle, 1986), and more recently, for not reflecting societal changes in role complexity resulting from the range of work and non-work roles that employees now hold (Wickham and Parker, 2007). Additionally, Biddle (1979) acknowledges that role theory could be seen as a set of broad concepts malleable enough to be applied to the analysis of any social situation. But he believes that this "plasticity" (p. 8) is a major reason for role theory's usefulness and popularity.

In relation to internal coaches, role theory potentially offers a theoretical framework with which to examine what expectations stakeholders have of those who act as internal coaches and how the visibility or otherwise of the coaching role affects those attitudes, how internal coaches are impacted by the added complexity of holding one more role within their organisation, and how the additional role complexity impacts the internal coach in terms of motivation, stress or conflict.

Role theory: Stakeholders, visibility and expectations

In carrying out a role the role holder acts in relation to other, connected roles and the occupants of those roles. In role theory these relationships are referred to as a role-set. However, role-set is one of those concepts for which different definitions have been put forward and need to be considered. Merton (1957 p. 110) first used the term 'role-set' to define "that complement of role-relationships in which persons are involved by virtue of occupying a particular social status." By social status he meant a "position in a social system involving designated rights and obligations," and that a social status can involve a number of roles, a role being those behaviours directed to those expectations. However, he did not regard a role-set as meaning the same as multiple roles, because multiple roles refer to roles associated with different social statuses. Biddle (1979) claimed to follow Merton in defining a set of roles performed by an individual as a role-set. But Katz and Kahn (1978) characterised the role-set of a focal role in two ways. On the one hand as the offices, or other roles, that are directly linked to the focal role (after Merton, 1957), but also as the individuals, by dint of their roles, who are directly linked to the focal role holder. This appears to move the definition of role-set away from a group of sub-roles that contribute to the whole within a social status, to relationships with other roles and individuals with which the focal role holder interacts. Mullins (2016) agrees, defining a role-set as those people outside an individual's own group who a role holder has a relationship with because of their role; that is those "with whom the individual has meaningful interactions in connection with the performance of the role" (p. 288). The difference between Merton/Biddle and Katz and Kahn/Mullins is important, because for a manager who is a purchasing manager and an internal coach the former would say the two roles are within one social status and are therefore elements of one role-set, whereas the latter would see the two roles as potentially having separate stakeholders and therefore role-sets. In this thesis Mullins' (and Katz and Kahn's) perspective of role-set is taken.

As Katz and Kahn (1978) make clear, members of a role-set have a stake in the performance of the role in question. For example, they may be rewarded by it, or judged upon its execution, or dependent on it to perform their own role: that is, they have expectations. Role-set members are not passive in relation to these expectations, but instead attempt to influence the role holder: expectations are communicated, or sent, to the role holder (Katz and Kahn, 1978). The nature and extent of this attempt to influence depends on the importance of the role to the role-set member. The role holder is not directly influenced by what is sent however, but by what is received. How closely sent and received correspond depends on the communication. Differences can be the result of misunderstanding or error but also disagreement or resistance. As these latter reasons indicate there are also internal forces acting on the role holder. These include the role holder's intrinsic motivation

in relation to carrying out the role and their own perspective of what is the right thing to do in relation to the role (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Goffman (1961) has proposed the concept of role distancing; the process by which a role holder makes clear to their role-set their unwillingness to comply with an element of the role expected of them. He makes the point that the role holder does not simply passively receive expectations but influences the expectations of role-set members through feedback to them. Feedback received by the role-set on the performance of the role then determines what further actions role-set members take. The point is made by Mullins (2016) that role expectations can be set out formally or informally. Formal expectations can include written or verbal instructions issued, documents such as job descriptions and contracts, or, legal obligations defined for a role. However, there can also be informal expectations imposed on members by their group, which they may not even be aware of, such as the attitude they are expected to adopt towards management. He also suggests that there may be an opportunity for some, typically more senior people, to determine their own behaviour – "self-established roles" (p. 289) – where formal expectations are only vaguely specified or loosely applied. It is clear therefore that the way a role is performed is the result of a combination of organisational factors, stakeholder attitudes, relationships between the role holder and role-set members, and the personal characteristics of the role holder.

A key factor in the awareness and understanding of a role by stakeholders, the role-set, is the extent to which they have visibility of the role. Goffman (1959) asserted that for a role to be recognised, and the costs to the role holder of performing the role to be acknowledged, the role must be made visible: dramatised. He acknowledges that this happens naturally with some roles because of their nature, but not all; that lack of visibility of what is being done can result in the role being under appreciated. Biddle (1979) agrees, some roles are performed in public whilst others are carried out in private. Because public roles are visible, they receive feedback and role holders are therefore more likely to conform to expectations, whereas less visible roles require greater internalised control on the part of the role holder. For this reason, professional bodies impose codes of conduct or ethics on their members. Biddle (1979) also believes that visibility helps stakeholders to become familiar with a role, reducing the likelihood of misunderstanding. But, if the situation in which a role occurs shields it from the view of members of its role-set then the role holder is less likely to experience pressure or outside interference (Merton, 1957). Under these circumstances the role holder has more freedom to determine their own priorities.

Egan (1994) has identified activities taking place in organisations that are covert, hidden, not acknowledged or discussed. He called such activities, not part of the formal management processes of the organisation, shadow side activities. Though they often are, these activities are not necessarily bad for the organisation; he cites informal mentoring as an example of a positive shadow side activity.

Garvey (1999) also suggests that private mentoring relationships, whose existence is not known to others, may be examples of the shadow side in operation. Egan (1994) identifies five forms of shadow side behaviour. He sees the most important as the organisation's culture, as this determines the way things are done. Alongside the espoused values, beliefs and norms of the organisation he believes that there are unofficial values, beliefs and norms, and it is these that drive behaviours. Other categories he identifies are members' personal styles and behaviours, which can range from self-interest to selflessness; organisational social systems, meaning the groupings formed outside formal structures; organisational politics, or the use of power; and the hidden organisation, by which he means the parallel structures, private armies, that can be built. Egan believes that the shadow side is more complex than whether someone complies with their organisation's rules or not. He quotes examples of rule breaking, or initiative taking without authority that are subsequently seen as positive for the organisation.

Role theory suggests that the visibility of a role impacts stakeholders' understanding of and attitude towards that role. Therefore, how visible the internal coach's coaching role is to a stakeholder will influence that stakeholder's understanding of the coach role. This in turn will influence the stakeholder's expectations of the internal coach and the priority that the stakeholder assigns to the coaching activity in relation to other organisational responsibilities.

Role theory: Multiple roles, strain and conflict

The potential for conflict between roles has been a key focus of role theory applied to the study of organisations. Those employees who become part-time internal coaches are adding another role to their portfolio of responsibilities in the organisation. Katz and Kahn (1978) state that a role holder's situation increases in complexity as new activities are added to their role, though they acknowledge that this might be welcomed as enriching the role. Complexity also increases if additional roles are taken on or if carrying out a role involves crossing boundaries between subsystems within the organisation. Such complexity increases the likelihood of the role holder being involved with different role-sets, each having their own expectations and priorities. Stakeholder members of one role-set may not be members of other role-sets. It follows that a stakeholder might not recognise or be interested in roles that they are not directly engaged with. Therefore, greater role complexity increases the likelihood of the role holder experiencing conflicts between roles.

Role conflict has been defined as the simultaneous occurrence of two or more incompatible expectations (Biddle, 1986; Katz and Kahn, 1978). However, Mullins (2016) highlights that role conflict is a generic term which encompasses a number of situations: role incompatibility – the role holder is faced with incompatible expectations, compliance with one making compliance with the other harder

or impossible; role ambiguity – expectations are not clear or not understood; role overload – too many roles or variety of expectations, not all of which can be met, requiring priorities to be set; and role underload – expectations fall short of the role holder's view of the role. He notes that role overload is not the same as work overload which is a capacity issue associated with a role. Katz and Kahn (1978) believe that role ambiguity can also arise because the role holder is uncertain about how others perceive the role.

Someone who experiences stress as a result of role conflict has been said to be experiencing role strain[2] (Biddle, 1979). Goode (1960) saw role strain arising when the sum of an individual's role obligations is over demanding; that their capacity to cope is finite. He argued that "role strain begins to increase more rapidly with a larger number of roles than do the corresponding role rewards" (p. 487), and that the individual inevitably takes steps to reduce the role strain experienced. Merton (1957) also thought that the role holder would seek to reduce the role conflict experienced but felt that their ability to do so would be limited. This raises the questions, what steps do role holders take to resolve the conflict that is causing the stress experienced, and how do they manage the portfolio of roles that they have?

A theory of role conflict resolution was proposed by Gross, Mason and McEachern (1958). They proposed that, confronted with two conflicting roles an individual will either choose one of them, compromise by partially conforming to both, or withdraw and avoid either: choose, compromise, withdraw. Van de Vliert (1981) modified this theory, proposing that in the majority of situations only one of the role choices is legitimate or has sanctions attached to it and that therefore choice is the action most frequently taken. The alternatives, compromise or avoidance only come into play when there is no clear difference between the roles in terms of legitimacy or sanctions.

As to how individuals manage their multiple roles, two strategies have been proposed: segmentation, where roles are clearly bounded; and integration, where roles overlap in terms of time and resources (Carton and Ungureanu, 2018). Ashforth, Kreiner and Fugate (2000) see any pair of roles as sitting somewhere on a continuum between segmentation and integration. If roles are segmented then boundaries are inflexible and impermeable, the roles have distinct objectives and role-sets. This reduces blurring of roles but increases the cost of transitioning between roles. If roles are integrated differentiation is low, there is cross-role interaction, and role identities for each role are similar. Crossing between roles is easier, but role confusion and interference is greater. They believe that the more an individual identifies themselves with a role the more they will try to integrate that role into their other roles. However, they state that organisational context influences role identities and role

[2] Whilst Biddle (1979) and Goode (1960) use the term role strain to describe the impact of stress experienced due to role conflict, elsewhere the terms role strain and role stress appear to be regarded as having the same meaning.

boundaries, and that the stronger the organisational influence the weaker the individual influence. In a study of 16 scholar-practitioners, who all held the boundary crossing roles of researcher, teacher and practitioner, Carton and Ungureanu (2018) identified that participants experienced tension between institutional pressure to separate roles and individual aspiration to integrate them. They identified three strategies that participants used to manage this tension: role (re)ordering - bounding and planning roles within the portfolio, and reprioritising and re-planning when necessary (most segmented); role interspacing – establishing a boundary around the portfolio of roles, making them distinct from other professions; and temporary role bundling – combining resources from multiple roles to achieve some aim (most integrated). They believe these three strategies occupy different positions on the segmentation-integration continuum and have different impacts on knowledge sharing across roles, from least to most.

Role conflict in organisations has been associated with stress, and with poor performance and reduced organisational commitment (Biddle, 1986). In a review of the literature on role stress Örtqvist and Wincent (2006) found widespread support (approximately 300 articles) for the notion that role stress is detrimental to role holders. Their meta-analysis found significant support for the notion that role conflict was positively related to emotional exhaustion and propensity to quit, and negatively related to organisational commitment and job satisfaction. However, there have been a small number of studies that have challenged the finite resources/role stress assumption. Sieber (1974) has argued that the benefits of accumulating more roles outweigh the stresses resulting. Role strain has two possible components: time pressure (overload) and conflicting requirements. He argues that time might be more elastic than is assumed in the fixed or finite resources models of role stress. He believes that accumulating multiple roles increases rights and benefits, not just obligations; results in greater agency or freedom, which is rewarding; buffers the individual against setbacks or boredom; and results in personal gratification and enrichment. He states that “despite the probability that managers with highly diversified role-sets are exposed to conflicting expectations and overload, it is precisely these men [sic] who more often feel that their jobs satisfy an array of basic personality needs” (p. 576). Marks (1977) has also challenged the ‘scarcity’ theory of finite resources, strained by the demands of multiple roles. He proposed that roles can generate energy as well as consume it. He acknowledges that the finite resources model, that multiple roles result in over demand and the need to compromise, has been widely applied, but challenges this assumption. His argument is that energy and time are both flexible, expanding and contracting based upon commitment. Nordenmark (2004) sought to test role stress theory versus role expansion theory using data from a large longitudinal study of approximately 6000 people in Sweden who were interviewed twice with a gap of circa eight years. He found that both the number of social roles held (within and outside work) and an increase

in the number of social roles held between interviews increased individual well-being, supporting role expansion theory. He suggests that holding multiple social roles has the effect of generating social and economic resources that support the individuals concerned in achieving a good life.

This review suggests that role theory offers a framework to examine how stakeholder understanding, expectations and priorities in relation to internal coaching might colour and shape their interaction with coaching in organisations and internal coaches. It also offers the opportunity to look at the impact on internal coaches of adding the coach role to their existing organisational responsibilities and of examining what steps internal coaches take to try to mitigate any stress or conflict experienced as a result. The rest of this section will use role theory to explore the impact on internal coaches of being a coach alongside other organisational responsibilities, and how the attitudes and expectations of different stakeholder groups, internal and external to the organisation, impact upon coaching in organisations.

The impact of having a coaching role alongside other organisational roles

It has been suggested that the environment in which internal coaches operate is slightly different to that which external coaches experience because they have multiple roles, and as a result, multiple stakeholders, potentially in different role-sets (Wilson, 2008). St John-Brooks (2014) suggests that internal coaches face several areas of challenge which appear to relate to their holding more than one role in the organisation

- balancing the coaching and day-job roles – time pressures, including the risk that their line manager withdraws his or her support; feeling guilty about taking time out from their day-job; being in the right frame of mind when switching between roles
- being part of the same system – maintaining neutrality and objectivity; knowing personally the stakeholders the coachee is discussing; challenging the coachee appropriately
- ethical dilemmas faced

Hunt and Weintraub (2007) characterise this challenge in terms of organisational politics, suggesting that there is more at stake for the internal coach, making it more difficult to “speak truth to power” (p. 20). Maxwell (2011) and Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas (2013) also acknowledge that internal coaches are involved with a more complex web of stakeholders, and therefore organisational and relationship politics, as a result of their being ‘insiders’ than are external coaches. In addition, St John-Brooks (2014) has identified dilemmas that arise from potential conflict between the individual’s

coach role and their organisational role: conflict of interest, or boundary issues because of overlap between the coach and coachee's day-jobs; the coach having insider knowledge about the coachee's situation; the temptation to use the coach's position to 'fix' the coachee's problem; or the temptation to poach a coachee for the coach's own team. It is perhaps unsurprising therefore that some organisations have reported tension, or conflict, between internal coaches' day-jobs and their coaching role, which had in some cases led to internal coach attrition (Knights and Poppleton, 2008). This suggests that some internal coaches have withdrawn from the coach role to reduce the conflict they have experienced.

The study reported by Knights and Poppleton (2008) found that whilst some organisations had been very successful in using staff to coach, others had struggled. They connected this difference to the degree of support provided for coaching by the organisation. Both Maxwell (2011) and Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas (2013) believe that the conflict and tension that internal coaches are likely to experience in carrying out their role means that they need access to support on an ongoing basis. A study by DiGirolamo, Rogers and Heink (2016) found that while both external and internal coaches focus upon their clients, internal coaches have a greater focus on ensuring that their scheme has support within the organisation and is aligned with the organisation's goals; that is, they are focussed upon aligning the coaching scheme with the expectations of organisational stakeholders. Similarly, Robson (2016) in an ethnographic study of the introduction of internal supervisors into an internal coaching scheme found the priorities of the trainee internal supervisors were different to those of the external practitioners facilitating the training: the external practitioners wanted to focus upon the supervision process and skills development whereas the internal supervisors' focus was upon establishing that they had organisation buy-in and support. Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) believe that part-time internal coaches should have their coach role acknowledged as part of their job description: a demonstration of support by the organisation for their coaching role. However, in spite of the widely espoused importance of ongoing practice development and support for all coaches, St John-Brooks (2014) found that the support provided for internal coaches by their organisations is very variable, ranging from a comprehensive package of CPD and supervision opportunities to nothing at all.

That internal coaches also have organisational responsibilities has led some to question the internal coach's ability to maintain confidentiality and build trust, key to a good coaching relationship. For de Haan (2008) the internal coach is not truly independent and therefore objectivity and trust are issues, and for Mihiotis and Argirou (2016) being an insider means that there are trust and confidentiality issues which limit the effectiveness of the internal coach. Hunt and Weintraub (2007) believe that the external coach, as an outsider has the advantage of being seen as trustworthy,

whereas an internal coach has to establish personal trust through their conduct, and despite their other organisational roles. They suggested that an internal coach may be less objective than an external coach but admitted that there had been no research to support this view. Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) state that a downside of internal coaches is the potential for conflict between their responsibilities to the coachee and to the organisation, but they also go on to acknowledge that they could find no evidence of this happening. This suggests that internal coaches are assumed to be unable to manage their coaching and other organisational roles in a way that avoids conflict between them. In contrast, whilst Machin (2010) found that trust between internal coach and coachee is extremely important to achieving a good coaching relationship, he discovered that the coachees in his study were willing to give that trust. He found that the importance of trust in the coaching relationship is recognised and valued by both parties, and it is this that enables the coach to achieve both psychological depth and challenge. In her survey, St John-Brooks (2010) found that 89% of participants considered the fact that they were coaching someone to be confidential information and that such confidentiality could only be broken if they considered the coachee or the organisation to be at serious risk. Rock and Donde (2008a) acknowledge that, for internal coaches, issues exist relating to trust and confidentiality, boundary management and potential conflicts of interest. However, they believe that these issues can all be managed through training, supervision, and having proper recruitment policies in place.

The perceived conflict between the individual's internal coach role and their organisational role is one of the key reasons given that executive clients are usually the preserve of the external coach (Knights and Poppleton, 2008; Ridler Report, 2011; St John-Brooks, 2014). This view is supported by survey evidence which suggests that the more senior the coachee the more likely they are to use an external coach (Ridler Report, 2011): 85% of organisations agreed that their executives prefer an external coach (Ridler Report, 2013). St John-Brooks (2014) did find that this was not always the case, with 10% of internal coaches in her survey (n=123) stating that they had coached a senior executive. However, 5% of those surveyed were full-time coaches and it is not clear whether they were included in those stating they had coached a senior executive.

This review has identified a number of challenges and conflicts that appear to be the result of the internal coach being an insider, having organisational responsibilities alongside their coaching responsibilities. As a result, internal coaches are felt to require support from the organisation if they are to carry out their coaching role. For some, these issues are felt to limit the scope and effectiveness of the internal coach. However, it is unclear whether these issues are felt to be significant by internal coaches, or, what impact they have upon them. In the next section the nature of the support required

for coaching to thrive at a coaching scheme or organisation level rather than an individual coach level will be explored through the literature relating to creating a coaching culture.

Promotion, integration and role-modelling: Key requirements necessary for coaching to thrive in an organisation

During the 2000's the term 'coaching culture' entered the language of organisations (Brock, 2011). The proposition being that a coaching culture can be achieved by adopting a coaching style of management to engage colleagues across the organisation (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012). Those advocating the introduction of a coaching culture have identified key requirements and potential pitfalls for successful implementation, in effect offering a window through which the requirements necessary for coaching to thrive in an organisation can be viewed. The approach advocated suggests that the organisation's leadership need to actively promote coaching and make clear their expectation that others in the organisation will get behind coaching too. This is made clear by Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) who, reviewing the coaching culture literature identified three key requirements common across the writings: the widespread, proactive promotion of coaching; the integration of coaching into the organisation; and the role modelling of coaching, demonstrating leaders' commitments to personal development. These requirements emphasise the importance of the coaching role-set actively engaging with and supporting coaching activity within the organisation.

If a culture of coaching is to be created, then the promotion of coaching is seen as a key requirement. Rock and Donde (2008b) state that to successfully implement an internal coaching scheme a communication plan is needed. It is necessary to create visibility top to bottom and across the organisation, and to educate stakeholders to ensure understanding of what coaching is and is not. This education process also needs to address stakeholder motivation to get on board and ensure that no stigma attaches to being coached (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Wilson, 2011). Key learnings identified by organisations in successfully introducing coaching include growing the understanding that coaching is effective, the need for high level sponsorship, and the need for constant communication of what coaching has to offer (Ridler Report, 2016). Knights and Poppleton (2008) found that most organisations feel line manager engagement is key to the successful implementation of coaching. Line managers can hold a number of roles related to coaching: support coaching for their subordinates; adopt a coaching management style; act as internal coaches; be an advocate for coaching in the organisation. Survey participants (Ridler Report 2016), asked about their organisation's key learnings in implementing coaching, stated the importance of a process that engages line managers, connecting them into the coaching of their subordinates;

effectively emphasising the need for line managers to be part of the coaching role-set. However, St John-Brooks (2014) found that whilst some line managers might authorise a subordinate to become an internal coach, they might not recognise their subordinate's coach role. This raises the possibility that the line manager is a member of the role-set of the internal coach's day-job, but not a member of the role-set of the internal coach's coaching role.

Coaching also appears to be vulnerable to changes in role-set composition, and to the level of priority placed on coaching by members of the role-set. McComb (2012a) cautions that senior management buy-in and motivation to coach should not be assumed, and Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005) acknowledge that in trying to embed coaching in an organisation "the critical mass, at which coaching behaviours become the norm, is relatively high" (p. 59). They highlight the risk if management of coaching is centralised that loss of that centre might mean coaching fails. They return to this risk in their follow up book a decade later (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016), saying

> A question we are often asked: Can you give examples of organisations that have fully achieved a coaching culture? Our answer is always no, because it's so difficult to maintain a consistent coaching climate. […] even strong cultures are vulnerable to a change of leadership to people with different values or to an influx of large numbers of people who don't 'get' the coaching culture. (p. xii).

Hawkins (2012) agrees, seeing coaching as always vulnerable to changes in stakeholders.

What Clutterbuck, Megginson, Hawkins and others are highlighting is the need for coaching to be integrated within the organisation rather than being managed as a separate activity. Hawkins (2012) believes that key pitfalls when trying to introduce coaching are that the support base is not sufficiently broad, that the loss of key staff has a detrimental impact, or that coaching is seen as an HR activity rather than a business activity. There is a strong belief that a clear vision for coaching needs to be established (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Rock and Donde, 2008b; Wilson, 2011). Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005) highlight the need to establish a clear link to a business need, and the understanding that coaching is the way to address this need. Hawkins (2012) too emphasises the need to link coaching to the business strategy, positioning this within the context of the wider cultural development of the organisation.

A support structure for coaching is seen as key to its integration into the organisation. Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005) identified support for the coaches - training, ongoing practice development, scheme leadership - as key to ensuring coaching is embedded in an organisation. Hawkins (2012) adds supervision to this list. St John-Brooks (2014) sees one of the key challenges internal coaches face is coping with feelings of isolation and of being under-valued, and that ongoing support is necessary to combat this. Humphrey and Dean (2016) believe that a scheme manager is

crucial to the success of a coaching scheme: the person who makes things happen. Hawkins (2012) agrees, believing that coaching in an organisation is vulnerable to a failure to proactively manage it.

The third theme Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) identified from the coaching culture literature was role modelling. For example, McComb (2012b) emphasises the importance of leaders demonstrating commitment to their own learning and development as a way of getting subordinates on board with coaching. Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) talk about the need for a "supportive climate" (pp. 41-42) to be created if coaching is to thrive and believe that commitment to this approach needs to be demonstrated by the organisation's leadership.

Overall, if coaching is to become embedded in an organisation, the coaching culture literature emphasises the importance of a coaching role-set that is proactive in its promotion of and support for coaching activity. It makes clear the view that if coaching is to thrive this coaching role-set must include members who are at the top of the organisation. However, the way in which stakeholders are discussed appears, largely, to be in relation to coaching rather than the internal coach. This suggests the possibility that the organisation's coaching role-set might have a different, albeit overlapping membership to the individual internal coach's role-set. This in turn leaves open the possibility that what the internal coach experiences might be different to what the organisation espouses.

So far, this review has focussed upon what is happening within the organisation but coaching in organisations and internal coaching takes place within a wider context, that of the coaching industry. Two aspects of this wider relationship will be considered: the impact of calls for coaching to become a profession and the influence of the commercial nature of coaching on the coaching research agenda.

Calls for the professionalisation of coaching

The rapid growth of coaching in the 1990's/early 2000's led to calls for professionalisation: for coaching to move from an occupation to a profession. Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) note as early as the early 1990's buyers of coaching services were looking for ways to differentiate good coaches from poor coaches. Coaching was likened to the Wild West (Sherman and Freas, 2004): chaotic and fraught with risk; reliable information hard to come by; not clear what qualifies someone to be a coach. Berglas (2002 p. 87) expressed the fear that poorly trained coaches could do clients "more harm than good," and Bluckert (2004 p. 53) was concerned about the proliferation of poorly trained coaches potentially "rolling off two-to-five-day courses." He saw buyers of coaching becoming more discerning about the services they bought, wanting to ensure that their money was wisely spent. This in turn put pressure on coaches to demonstrate credibility and to differentiate themselves in an

increasingly crowded marketplace (Drake 2008). In an ICF survey (ICF, 2016) coaches (n=15,380) identified that the biggest obstacles they faced in the development of their business going forward were untrained people calling themselves coaches (44%) and marketplace confusion (28%). Pressure for the professionalisation of the coaching industry was coming from both commissioners of coaching services and coaches themselves (Bluckert, 2004; Gray, 2011).

Professionalisation is a process in which a group defines the rules and standards by which it will operate and the qualifications necessary to be a member. Being part of a profession therefore involves compliance, monitoring and sanctions, usually controlled by a professional body which acts as gatekeeper to membership and seeks to establish the distinctiveness and protect the credibility of the group (Garvey, 2011). Grant and Cavanagh (2004) define key criteria for an occupation having professional status: significant barriers to entry; shared body of knowledge; formal academic qualifications; regulatory body with powers to admit, discipline and sanction members; enforceable code of ethics; and state-sanctioned licensing or regulation. Profession status therefore means that only qualified persons can practise (Lane, 2010), and in becoming a profession, decisions must be made about who can be in and who must be out (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004).

The goal of professionalisation of coaching has however been criticised. Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) express concern that it drives a focus on those areas that generate the most revenue, which might not be the areas of social need; that it serves members' self-interests; and that it protects those on the inside from those on the outside. Hawkins (2008) is concerned that raising barriers to entry to protect those already on the inside will limit "the range, diversity and innovation of the next generation [of coaches] that need to be taking the profession forward" (p. 34). Particular concern has been expressed about the 'coaching hours' basis of distinguishing accreditation levels deployed by professional coaching bodies such as ICF, Association of Coaching (AC) and European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) (Bachkirova and Lawton Smith, 2015; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2018). In other professions higher status is usually conferred to reward experience and contribution rather than competency (Bachkirova and Lawton Smith, 2015). Despite the efforts of the professional coaching bodies to promote coaching as a profession most agree that coaching is an industry, not yet a profession (Grant, 2008; Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Gray, 2011, Lane, 2010).

Concerns about the drive for professionalisation of coaching have led to the suggestion that rather than the development of a coaching profession, coaching should focus upon coach professionalism, the development of coaches' professional practice (Garvey, 2011; Lane, Stelter and Stout Rostron, 2010). In other helping professions, for example medicine, nursing, psychology and social work, whilst the expectations set out for professional practice mirror those for membership of a profession with regard to training and conduct, there also appears to be a focus on the commitment

to ongoing learning and evaluation of practice. For social workers practicing in England this is set out by Social Work England on their website: https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/standards/professional-standards/ (accessed 19/2/21). Social workers are expected to keep their knowledge base up to date through ongoing engagement with research in their field – lifelong learning – and to engage with other practitioners to support that ongoing learning process. Additionally, social workers are regarded as having a responsibility to regularly evaluate their practice, and act on that evaluation, through mechanisms such as supervision. Within social work therefore, professional practice is seen as a journey rather than a destination, and a personal obligation. This focus upon continuously attending to one's practice is arguably relevant to all the helping professions, including coaching.

In coaching, Garvey (2011) is critical of the competency-based approach of professionalisation promoted by the professional bodies, which he sees as requiring only a limited, "pre-specified education" (p. 63) rather than promoting a commitment to continuous learning. Garvey's position aligns with Lane, Stelter and Stout Rostron (2010) and Stober (2010), who stated their belief that continuous learning through engagement with the evolving research literature to be an ongoing obligation for coaches. Similarly, in the way that social workers are expected to evaluate their practice, Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) believe that coaches must regularly reflect upon their coaching in a rigorous and critical way as part of their professional practice. As is the case in social work, Hawkins (2010) regards supervision as key to this coach self-reflection, and to professional practice development. Whilst Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) agree that supervision can support this need, they believe that practice scrutiny can also be achieved through engagement with colleagues, also a feature of social worker practice development. Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) see the professional bodies' focus upon establishing standardised competency, standards and ethics frameworks as inappropriate. Instead, they believe that the professional bodies would do better to focus on helping their members "to 'do the right thing' through educational debate and collective continuing professional development" (p. 273).

Nevertheless, professionalisation is a strong discourse, promoted by coaching's professional bodies, which seeks to define who can call themselves a coach. However, within this debate there does not appear to have been any discussion of where internal coaches would, or indeed should fit within a coaching profession. The belief has already been highlighted that internal coaches should operate to the same standards and be subject to the same scrutiny as external coaches. If this was to include the requirements of professional accreditation, as a licence to practice, then a coaching-hours based approach to gaining that accreditation could potentially exclude part-time internal coaches.

Practice leads research

A second area where it can be argued that the interests of coaching industry stakeholders set the agenda is coaching research. It appears to have developed in line with the growth of coaching in organisations and to be largely focussed upon demonstrating the value of coaching to organisational clients. Although the first peer reviewed academic paper on coaching was published in 1937 (Gorby, 1937), relatively few articles on coaching were published until the late 1990's/early 2000's (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004; Fillery-Travis and Lane, 2006; Joo, 2005; Passmore and Fillery-Travis, 2011). Numbers vary, but database searches for peer reviewed papers on coaching by Grant and Cavanagh (2004) identified 128, of which 73 were classified as discussion papers and 55 reported empirical research. Few of these were published before the 1990's; those that were being described as descriptive, based on small case studies. Joo (2005) identified 78 articles. Of these only 11 were research papers, the majority of which had been published in the prior 10 years. In a later review Grant et al (2010) identified 518 scholarly papers and dissertations published between 1937 and 2009. Of these 93 were published between 1937 and 1999, the remaining 425 published between 2000 and May 2009, though empirical studies were still outnumbered by descriptive or opinion papers. Gray, Garvey and Lane (2016) believe that coaching research is finally developing a credible base with more than 250 empirical papers published in the previous five years.

However, the quality of coaching research has been criticised. Reviewers have variously described it as being poor, practitioner based with few empirical studies (Joo, 2005); predominantly advocacy based, lacking a robust evidence base (McGurk, 2012); and even, as "fragmented, partisan and impressionistic" (Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2009 p. 40). Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2009) based their blunt assessment of coaching research upon concerns that research was often conducted by insiders and was aimed at a business audience; that practice improvement advocacy was often based upon beliefs of the authors rather than research outcomes; many studies were evaluations of single schemes and samples sizes were often small; data collected was frequently from coachees rather than other stakeholders, or the source was not stated; and often the limitations of studies were not acknowledged. Their analysis of the nature of coaching research arguably points to the influence of coaching's commercial focus.

As already suggested, the research that is taking place is, largely, focussed upon specific aspects of coaching. Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2009) describe the archetypal coaching paper as focussing upon the impact of coaching on the business; that return on investment (ROI) is the dominant measure; it is an insider account, authored by a practitioner; and that limited attention is given to the research protocol involved. Coaching research has been similarly described as focussing upon delivery and outcomes (Grant et al, 2010) and upon the coaching process, outcomes and benefits

(Fillery-Travis and Cox, 2014). For the third edition of their book, *Coaching and Mentoring: Theory and Practice*, Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2018) revisited their view of coaching research and concluded that the practitioner and ROI orientation has not changed. This research focus aligns closely with what a large survey of coaches (n=15,380) (ICF, 2016) articulated are the biggest opportunities to further develop and grow their practices: increasing awareness of the benefits of coaching (38% of participants) and availability of credible ROI data (26%). As already noted, internal coaching remains under-researched in relation to coaching as a whole in spite of the evidence of its scale and importance in organisations. It is tempting to speculate that the commercial focus of coaching is the explanation for this seeming lack of interest.

In 2008 an attempt was made to stimulate research on coaching (the Dublin Declaration on Coaching) which resulted in 100 research proposals being generated and published on-line by the International Coaching Research Forum (Kauffman, Russell and Bush, 2008). Stern and Stout-Rostron (2013) identified that these 100 proposals could be grouped into 16 focus areas and reviewed what research had taken place within each focus area between 2008 and June 2012: 263 papers met their criteria for inclusion. They found that 13 of the 16 areas had received little research attention (defined as fewer than 20 research papers published over the four-and-a-half-year period). Two research areas generated 50% of the articles identified: coaching process (n=88) and outcomes (n=46). Coaching in organisations – who is involved, support provided, impact on organisation - generated 22 articles over the period, barely above the 'little research attention' threshold. The initiative appeared to stimulate coaching research following publication of the 100 proposals based upon the number of research papers published each year: 2008 – 41; 2009 – 83; 2010 – 72. However, based upon Stern and Stout-Roston's (2013) analysis this was not sustained: 2011 – 42; 2012 (January to June) – 25. A later systematic review of the developing empirical literature base by Blackman, Moscardo and Gray (2016) concluded that most of the gaps in coaching research previously identified remain.

Research into coaching is taking place but its development is slow. It has been suggested that coaching research requires a multi-disciplinary approach involving universities, practitioners, the professional bodies and businesses, and that little funding is available for such cross-organisational collaboration (Fillery-Travis and Cox, 2014). Linley (2006) believes that cost is the primary force holding coaching research back. He sees research as expensive in terms of the time participants, both researcher and researched, have to invest, and in terms of the physical costs involved for the researcher. However, he believes that most coaching research has a business focus, and that the biggest barrier is the opportunity cost, by which he means the minimal benefit obtained by participants for the costs incurred in supporting the research. Lane (2010 p. 157) states bluntly that

> We need to recognise that evidence exists in a marketplace; it has an investment value to commercial sponsors who may have an interest in prompting certain types and interpretations of research over others.

Additionally, Gray, Garvey and Lane (2016) suggest that coaching's professional bodies are more focussed upon member accreditation than on research, and that the drivers of research in higher education institutions, at least in the UK, do not favour researching coaching. Bachkirova and Lawton Smith (2015) share this concern when they point out that university courses find it increasingly hard to gain professional body accreditation because the professional bodies' focus is upon skills and coaching hours logged rather than on developing understanding and critical thinking. They see universities and professional bodies drifting apart, something which does not bode well for the further development of coaching's research knowledge base. It appears that the coaching industry's need to demonstrate efficacy, and the coach-commissioners' challenge for coaching to demonstrate return-on-investment is resulting in a narrow focus upon coaching process, outcomes and benefits, rather than the building of a broad, high quality research evidence base.

As shown in the last two sections, coaching industry stakeholders setting the agenda for coaching are focussed upon establishing coaching's credibility and relevance with organisational clients. But internal coaches seem not to have been considered. Nor is it clear what impact this commercially driven agenda has or might have going forward on the role of the internal coach.

This section of the review has shown that a key focus of the literature is on the internal coach's multiple roles within the organisation, the likely conflicts that result, and the limitations these conflicts place on the internal coach's practice. But it has also shown that the evidence base supporting these assertions is limited. What is not clear from the literature is to what extent these role conflicts are experienced as significant by internal coaches or what impact they have. Perhaps because of these limiting assumptions, the need for top-down support if coaching is to be successful is emphasised; internal coaches are seen as a resource to deliver coaching rather than the driving force of coaching. The external stakeholder focus appears to be on creating a narrative that enables coaching to be sold to organisational clients, driving a focus on demonstrating credibility and ROI.

The experience of being an internal coach

The literature relating to internal coaches has focussed upon describing and bounding the role. It seems either aimed at promoting the use of internal coaches and describing the requirements of a scheme, or at limiting their role relative to 'professional' external coaches. It is, on the whole, a

conversation between those who either have something to sell or something to protect, and those responsible in organisations for coaching provision decisions. The role and limitations of internal coaches are part of that conversation, but internal coaches themselves appear not to be present in the discussions. What is missing is an understanding of how internal coaches experience taking on the coach role as part of their wider responsibilities, what impact the role has on them, and what they do as a result.

Reviews of the coaching literature by Mukherjee (2012) and Feehily (2018) found there has been almost no research conducted which looked at how internal coaches experience their coach role. St John-Brooks (2014) has suggested that there are rewards associated with being an internal coach

- making a contribution – the fulfilment experienced in seeing a coachee grow and the feeling of having made a difference; giving something back to the organisation
- being part of something bigger – part of a community of coaches; recognised and valued by the organisation; doing something important
- personal development – learning from those they coach; feeling more confident as they benchmark themselves against those they work with; enhancing their leadership skills
- greater organisational awareness – learning how other parts of the organisation operate and gaining a better understanding of the organisation's internal politics.

And Gormley and Nieuwerburgh (2014) also concluded that there are tangible benefits from being an internal coach. However, the evidence base on how internal coaches experience their coach role, and the impact it has on them, remains very limited. Though there has been research conducted into a similar role, the mentor.

Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2009) conclude that there are many similarities between coaching and mentoring. Garvey (2010: 351) believes that they "share many of the same practices, applications and values." Both coaching and mentoring are now key elements of learning and development activity in many organisations (Gray, Garvey and Lane, 2016). Garvey (2011; 2014) and Western (2012) have suggested that there are particular similarities between internal coaches and mentors, both being insiders, coaching or mentoring within their own organisation, and both generally volunteer rather than being paid for their services. Given the apparent parallels between mentoring and coaching it is perhaps surprising that few have suggested that coaching could profitably draw on mentoring research (one example being Joo, 2005). Within mentoring research has been conducted to understand the factors that impact employees' propensity to mentor, and these findings offer, on

the face of it, the potential to contribute to the study of internal coaches' perceptions of their coaching role.

Below the sparse research literature on the internal coach experience will first be reviewed, and then the literature of what motivates someone to mentor others will be examined.

Experience of being an internal coach: Four research studies

Four studies have been identified which have gone some way to exploring the internal coach experience: St John-Brooks (2010); Leonard-Cross (2010); Mukherjee (2012); Feehily (2018). St John-Brooks (2010) used a questionnaire to try to understand what ethical dilemmas internal coaches experienced (n=123). Whilst fifty-two participants identified no dilemmas, the remaining 71 identified 139 dilemmas which she grouped to identify the main ethical dilemmas internal coaches faced. The dilemmas identified related to conflict between the coaching role and the employee's responsibilities to the organisation, maintenance of confidentiality and client boundary management. However, only the top three dilemmas – Third party wanting information on a coachee (n=18); Role conflict because coach and coachee roles impinge (n=17); and coachee wants to discuss someone well known to the coach (n=14) - were identified as issues by more than 10% of participants. What is not possible to determine is how significant to the coaches the dilemmas identified were felt to be. But that no single dilemma was identified by a large proportion of participants, and that 42% of coaches identified no dilemmas at all might indicate that their impact on the experience of being an internal coach is limited. St John-Brooks (2009) also acknowledged that many of the dilemmas identified are equally relevant to external coaches, particularly if the external coach works with a number of clients in the same organisation.

As part of a study looking at the impact of coaching on coachee's self-efficacy in a large public sector organisation, Leonard-Cross (2010) asked the 75 staff who had acted as coaches in the previous two years three questions about their own self-efficacy: 70% responded (n=52). She found that 98.1% reported that coaching gave them skills that would help them with issues in the future; that 94.2% felt better able to find solutions to problems; and that 86.6% felt clearer about personal goals. However, she acknowledged that "as only three questions were included this would need to be expanded to offer data of real value" (p. 45). A second issue she acknowledged related to the questionnaire design. A four-option scale was used which meant that there was no middle ground option, and some participants felt that the gaps between options was too large, making it difficult for participants to properly express their feelings.

Mukherjee (2012) reported on a case study of a coaching intervention in a large manufacturing organisation. His role was that of external coach brought into the organisation to

implement the internal coaching initiative. He looked at the impact of providing coaching on those who acted as internal coaches by collecting data before and after the coaching intervention. Forty managers volunteered to become coaches and take part in the programme, though only 19 met the minimum requirements for inclusion in the research: completion of 12 one-hour coaching sessions over 6-9 months involving three coachees. He reported that an interpersonal styles inventory, conducted before and after the coaching programme found that the group showed a positive shift in leadership style: questioning rather than telling, and supporting development of subordinates. In response to the question, "what do you think you have gained personally [from acting as a coach] and how will it benefit you in your professional and personal life?" (p. 84) 60% felt their interpersonal skills had improved; 39% felt they were a better listener, and 3 reported being calmer (in professional and personal life); 25% felt their confidence had increased, with 10% reporting improved self-believe; 33% reported improved work-life balance because their increased self-awareness had led to a decision to make changes; 13% felt a sense of achievement at their coachees improvement; and 15% felt they had developed a broader vision and better understanding of their role in building organisational capability. Mukherjee argues that developing internal coaches not only contains costs but also develops leadership competencies and confidence. This study did examine the impact of coaching on the coaches, having collected data before the programme began and then again after the coaching had been completed. However, Mukherjee acknowledges that the number of coaches involved was small and that they were all from a single organisation. It is also noteworthy that the amount of coaching the participants did was very limited.

Feehily (2018) conducted in-depth interviews (lasting between 45 and 90 minutes) with four coaches at a university in the UK. Three of the coaches interviewed had what she described as substantial coaching experience, with internal and external clients, whilst the fourth coach had coached one client since graduating as a coach. Interview transcripts were analysed using IPA, which resulted in three super-ordinate themes being identified. Feehily called the first theme "reactive sense-making" (p. 77), participants identifying drivers, either professionally or personally, which led them to coach - deficiencies in their working lives; seeking to align their own values and lived work experience – coaching being seen as a means of resolving the situation. She stated that "coaching provided each of them with the means to develop self-efficacy in addressing dissatisfying features of their own roles" (p. 78). The second theme, "experiential sense-making" (p. 78), captured the emotions experienced by the coaches. She noted that the mood of participants lightened when the discussions shifted from day-job to coaching; that coaching was experienced as uplifting, joyful, "an antidote to everyday frustrations" (p. 78). The coaches felt special, part of an elite group. They saw coaching as time for themselves, both "nurturing and stimulating" (p. 78). They were amazed at the

effectiveness of their coaching and its impact on those they coached. The final theme she called "embodied sense-making" (p. 79). This theme concerned the way that the coaching knowledge gained now impacted the way the coaches were at work: having a greater concern for others; better able to work with emotions; better able to look after themselves. The coaches had shifted from being focussed on self to being focussed on others. They felt more deeply connected to those they coached or worked with, and they appreciated themselves more and the need to look after themselves. Feehily concluded that the coaches experience skills enhancement (for example listening, management) as reported by others, but, also that they now engage with people differently and that as a result the way that others relate to the coaches has changed too. Feehily suggests that the move from a self-focussed perspective of coaching to an altruistic focus

> seems to hinge on the nurturing environment of the coaching course, the coaching itself and the group supervision. The feeling of being brought into an elite, supportive group of trained coaches has been fundamental to a developmental process whereby coaches progress along a continuum towards greater altruism and connectedness. (p. 82).

A limitation of this study is that it took place in one organisational setting, and that setting was highly supportive of coaching and its coaches.

These studies do give some limited insight into how internal coaches experience their role. Participants reported that they had developed new skills, greater self-awareness and for some greater self-confidence. Two of the studies (Feehily, 2018 and Mukherjee, 2012) found that, as a result of acting as a coach, participants appeared to shift their management style, becoming more 'other' focussed. Interestingly, Feehily (2018) suggests that, for her subjects, coaching appeared to address some deficiency in their professional lives. She suggests that features of the environment in which the coaches interviewed were operating – nurturing; membership of an elite group; supportive – was key to them moving from self-focused to other-focussed.

Below, research on the mentor experience will be reviewed to see what these findings could contribute to our understanding of how internal coaches are impacted by their experience of coaching.

The experience of being a mentor

Mentoring is potentially costly for the mentor, in terms of both the time taken up and effort put in (Mullen, 1994; Van Emmerik, Baugh and Euwema, 2005), and yet individuals take up the role. Four factors that impact the propensity to mentor will be reviewed: prior experience of being mentored, being other-focussed, benefits to the mentor, and situational factors.

Studies indicate that prior experience of being mentored or of mentoring is positively related to willingness or intention to mentor in the future (Allen, 2007; Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Allen et al, 1997; Bozionelos, 2004; Ragins and Scandura, 1999). In a study of 27 mentors Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997) found that 17 said being mentored had positively influenced their decision to be a mentor, and 23 said that the experience had helped them prepare to be a mentor. Ragins and Scandura (1999) surveyed 275 executives and found that those who had previously been mentored focussed on the benefits of becoming a mentor more than the costs, whereas those without prior experience focussed more upon the costs. Allen (2007) believes that prior experience of being mentored positively impacts intention to mentor because the benefits of mentoring are recognised and there is a responsibility felt to give something back. Bozionelos (2004) suggests that mentoring is therefore a way of developing the next generation of mentors.

Both Levinson et al (1978) and Kram (1985) suggest that mentoring is both altruistic and provides benefit for the mentor. This is supported by Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997) who identified two factors relating to why mentors mentored: “other-focused” and “self-focused” (p77). Kram (1985) reports that mentors experience intrinsic satisfaction from helping junior colleagues develop: leaving one’s mark on the next generation. Similarly, Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997) suggested that mentors’ ‘other-focus’ was demonstrated by their stated desire to pass on their knowledge, build workforce capability, and help, support and improve the welfare of others. The intrinsic motivation factors described above have also been found to be significant in the decision to volunteer in other fields (Cappellari and Turati, 2004; Giles, 1977; Phillips and Phillips, 2010). In a study of burnout in volunteers, the significance of intrinsic motivations was shown by Moreno-Jimenez and Villodres (2010) who found that intrinsic motivations were negatively correlated with volunteer burnout. Whilst Giles (1977) suggested that intrinsic motivation was an important moderator of the relationship between higher order need satisfaction and volunteering for an enriched job role. However, in a study of undergraduates who had previously volunteered Finkelstein (2009) found that different motivational orientation, intrinsic versus extrinsic, did not impact the amount of time spent volunteering. And in a longitudinal study of hospice volunteers Finkelstein (2008) reported that whilst initially altruistic values were linked to volunteer activity, over time this shifted to a focus on personal growth: that their skills were being utilised; that the experience made them feel good about themselves.

As has already been suggested, mentoring is seen as providing benefits to the mentor. Benefits suggested include support, role enhancement and career development. For the mentor, mentees are a source of practical and emotional support (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Kram, 1985; Newby and Heide, 1992), information (Mullen and Noe, 1999; Newby and Heide, 1992) and

personal learning (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002). Newby and Heide (1992) identified that mentoring is potentially role enhancing because it adds variety and additional, new responsibilities to the mentor's day-job, and because the variety and complexity involved in the mentor role creates a stimulating challenge for the mentor. Kram (1985) believes that acting as a mentor also gives the mentor greater power and influence, the opportunity for the mentor to pass on their values to the next generation. Influence as a result of mentoring can also extend beyond those mentored because the mentor is recognised as someone who is developing talent in the organisation (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002; Newby and Heide, 1992). But Garvey (1999) highlights that whilst mentoring relationships are often public (visible, known about) they can also be private. He cites an example where a mentor kept their mentoring relationship private, hidden from their line manager, because they were concerned that it might put their position at risk. However, being a mentor is more often reported as benefiting the mentor's career (Bozionelos, 2004; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002; Ragins and Kram, 2007).

As well as personal factors influencing the decision to be a mentor situational factors have also been identified. Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997) found that organisational factors influenced the decision to mentor. For example, they found that perceived organisational support for employee learning and development, and line manager support of the mentor positively impacted motivation to mentor. Similarly, Orly (2008) found that the availability of meaningful support sources had a positive effect on mentors, and on mentors' contribution to their mentees. He also found that access to support sources appeared to increase mentor satisfaction with their performance as a mentor, presumably because they felt better able to carry out the role. However, Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997) also found that time and work demands were the most frequently raised factors which inhibited the intention to mentor. They also found that organisational structure impacts such as downsizing or restructuring, which put constraints on individual's capacity, inhibited mentoring. But, though Allen et al (1997) found that higher levels of job-induced stress did increase mentors' awareness of potential barriers to mentoring, it did not impact their intention to mentor. Interestingly, in looking at burnout in volunteers, Moreno-Jimenez and Villodres (2010) found that the greater the time spend volunteering the higher the level of burnout amongst volunteers, but that support for volunteers from the organisation and from other volunteers reduced the level of burnout.

Two other factors can be identified in relation to motivation to volunteer: agency and capability. Newby and Heide (1992) highlight 'choice' as a factor in motivating mentors; that is the freedom to choose to take part, and the ability to control the mentoring process. Whilst Giles (1977) found locus-of control to be an important moderator of the relationship between higher order needs and volunteering for an enriched job role. Both choice and locus-of-control can be seen as proxies for

the degree of agency that the volunteer perceives. Turning to capability, Newby and Heide (1992) believe that the extent to which an individual perceives themselves competent to mentor, their confidence as a mentor, is a motivation factor. Robson (2016) experienced the impact of capability concern when observing volunteer internal supervisors being asked to confirm that they were willing to take on the role; seeing them attempt to define, bound and limit the role as they wrestled with their capability concern.

This review suggests that both benefiting others and benefiting self are key factors influencing someone's propensity to mentor, and that for many the trigger for this realisation was the experience of being mentored themselves. Mentoring is often seen as an opportunity to support more junior colleagues and pass on knowledge, whilst at the same time being an opportunity for the mentor to learn and grow. Mentoring appears to enrich the organisational role of the mentor and being known as a mentor brings wider recognition of their contribution to the organisation. This suggests a number of topics that could be explored with internal coaches to understand what about their experience of being a coach influences their propensity to continue coaching.

- What motivated them to become an internal coach?
- Do they believe they are adding value through what they do?
- Is their contribution as a coach recognised?
- Are they supported to be a coach?
- Has being a coach benefited their career?
- Do they have freedom to manage their coach role alongside their day-job?
- Do they feel confident in their capability as a coach?

Summary

This review has shown that coaching is regarded as an important means of improving performance in organisations and is widely used. Further, it has demonstrated that internal coaches are important to the delivery of coaching in organisations, a way of controlling costs whilst increasing access.

However, the review has also shown that coaching, and internal coaches in particular are under-researched. Research into coaching is, largely, narrowly focussed on demonstrating its value to organisational clients; that is, commercially led. Our 'knowledge' of internal coaches is largely based upon practitioner advocacy, though it is often presented as evidence based. In this regard Frisch (2001) casts a long shadow over our assumptions about internal coaches. His assertions about their

strengths, weaknesses and limitations remain central to our image of internal coaches, even though a number of these views remain largely unsupported by research.

Applying a role theory lens raises questions about some of these assertions. For example, much is made of the dilemmas and conflicts internal coaches face, because their coach role has to be conducted alongside their other organisational responsibilities. These concerns are used to justify the need for support, but also to place limits on what internal coaches do. However, although these conflicts appear on the face of it plausible, there appears to be almost no evidence that suggests whether they are actually experienced as significant by internal coaches, or, what impact they have on internal coaches as a result. Similarly, the literature discusses a number of stakeholders who internal coaches will engage with, the focus being on the need to have buy-in and support. In reality different stakeholders have differing levels of visibility of what the internal coach is doing and different levels of interest in, or commitment to, coaching. As a result, the internal coach is likely to be faced with a wide range of different stakeholder expectations, potentially both favourable and antagonistic to their coaching role. Again, there appears to have been little research to suggest how internal coaches experience these stakeholder interactions, and what impact there is on them as a result.

"Does he take sugar?"[3] is a phrase that has come increasingly to mind as this literature review has progressed. It is a challenge to talk directly to a group in question (in the case of the radio programme of that title, disabled people, in terms of this review internal coaches) rather than talking to others about them. It is arguable that, to date, the conversation about internal coaching and internal coaches has taken place largely between coaching practitioners and organisational clients, and that these conversations have been underpinned by a number of untested assumptions about internal coaches. My research, in exploring how internal coaches experience the coach role and the impact the role has upon them, aims to address this issue. It is clear therefore that the research methodology adopted should enable direct access to internal coaches, rather than falling into the trap of asking a third party: "Does he take sugar?" In the next chapter the approach taken to avoid this trap is set out in more detail.

[3] 'Does he take sugar?' was the title of a BBC Radio4 programme about disability that ran for 20 years between 1977 and 1998. As the title suggests the programme challenged us to speak directly to the disabled rather than to talk to someone else about them.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Introduction

The literature review highlighted that whilst internal coaches are important in the delivery of coaching in organisations there has been almost no research into how these coaches experience their role or what impact their experience has on them. This is the knowledge gap that the current research sought to rectify. The study employed mixed methods research, a two-phase, sequential design – exploratory survey followed by in-depth one-to-one interviews – the qualitative phase (interviews) being the main data source. The study addressed the question: How does the experience of being an internal coach impact the coach? This chapter describes the research methodology used to address that question.

First, the philosophical position taken in the research is set out and the connection made to the research strategy adopted: mixed methods research. My position as both researcher and internal coach is also acknowledged. In the second part of the chapter how the research was conducted - internal coach recruitment, data collection, data analysis – and the outcome achieved is described. The findings from the research are described in chapters 4 and 5. A brief outline of the research conducted is provided initially to aid orientation through the rest of the chapter.

Outline

The research conducted was a mixed methods study. The research methods employed were a survey, using an on-line questionnaire, and 1-to-1 interviews. The questionnaire was deployed first, distributed to internal coaches via gatekeepers. The questionnaire was launched in October 2016 and closed in January 2017. During that time 39 gatekeepers were recruited who shared a link to the questionnaire with their coach networks. Four hundred and eighty-four internal coaches completed all or part of the questionnaire during the three months it was open. Analysis of the survey data generated a number of findings and questions that warranted further exploration. The questionnaire was also used to seek volunteers to take part in the second phase of the research, and 20 internal coaches were recruited from this pool of volunteers for interview. Semi-structured interviews were conducted between July 2017 and February 2018. All interviews were conducted at the coach's place of work. They were recorded and transcribed, and the transcripts analysed, generating a number of themes which helped make sense of the data gathered.

Research Philosophy

In chapter 1 I explained how I and a colleague, David, a fellow trainee coach, arrived at different conclusions about the role of goals in coaching. This in spite of us being given the same training and preparation for our coach role. Our individual experiences of coaching, and the way we interpreted our coach roles, led to us holding different views about the importance and place of goals in coaching. The position taken in this research was that individual internal coaches interpreted their coach role in response to their experience of coaching within their organisation. That whilst organisations put in place structures and objectives relating to coaching, how individual internal coaches made sense of coaching in their organisation would be shaped by their personal experiences of being a coach, and that therefore there would exist different interpretations of what being an internal coach meant.

The position articulated above relates to the nature of reality and how it can be explored; to matters of ontology and epistemology. The terminology applied by social scientists to ontology and epistemology is inconsistent, however, my position as outlined appears to be close to an interpretivist epistemology as described by Bryman (2012) and Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012). Ontologically my position is that of constructionism (Bryman, 2012), or relativism (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2015). Holding such a position inevitably impacted what I was interested to understand about internal coaches, and how I would go about generating that understanding: the research methodology adopted. Below, I set out how I arrived at this position and articulate the link between my philosophical commitment and my research methodology.

Bryman (2012) states that "questions of social ontology are concerned with the nature of social entities" (p. 32), and therefore, that whether social entities are considered to exist independently of the actors involved or to be constructed by the actors in their social interaction is the key question. He describes these ontological positions as objectivism and constructionism respectively, and states that commitment to one or other of these ontological positions necessarily impacts the form of the research question asked and the research strategy designed to answer it. He acknowledges that within a constructionist ontology the pre-existence of an organisation's structures and culture can be acknowledged whilst asserting that how actors will experience this reality can be different, based upon their different standpoints; that a given situation will be interpreted and perceived in different ways. Applied to internal coaches this position asserts that multiple perspectives are likely to be held, each derived from an individual coach's interpretation of the circumstances within which their coaching takes place. This in turn has implications for how knowledge about internal coaches is sought.

How the nature of the world can be enquired into and what can be regarded as knowledge of that world are matters of epistemology (Bryman, 2012; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2015; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Bryman (2012) highlights two contrasting views of how research should be carried out: positivism and interpretivism, though he acknowledges that these positions remain the subject of debate and disagreement between researchers. A positivist position assumes the existence of an external world that can be measured through objective methods (Bryman, 2012; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2015), the focus of the researcher being the collection of data on objects or resources (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). In contrast, an interpretivist approach focuses on how social actors make sense of their world (Bryman, 2012; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2015), the researcher's focus therefore is on accessing the actor's feelings and attitudes (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012).

Within an interpretivist paradigm therefore, the focus of the researcher is on understanding how the social actors, in this case internal coaches, interpret or make sense of their situation by investigating how they experience, interpret, explain and act on their situation (Duberley, Johnson and Cassell, 2012; Mason, 2018). This requires the researcher to try to understand the subject's world from the subject's point of view (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). It is therefore clear that, when considering the research strategy from an interpretivist stance a research methodology is required that enables

- Information from a range of subjects to be gathered
- Exploration of how subjects interpret or make sense of the context within which they are operating
- Subjects' perspectives of their experience to be captured
- The actions taken by subjects as a result of the meaning they assign to their internal coach role to be identified.

The methodology chosen was mixed methods research.

Mixed methods research could be seen as bringing together methods from different, perhaps incompatible research paradigms. This has led some to look to pragmatism to provide a justification for mixing quantitative and qualitative methods (Gray, 2014). However, whilst acknowledging that there are differences between quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in relation to their epistemological and ontological commitments, Bryman (2012) does not see the connection between research strategy and epistemological and ontological commitment as deterministic. He points to the frequent use of quantitative research methods within an interpretivist paradigm, highlighting for

example the use of survey instruments to study attitudes or meaning, and their use to explore, not just to test hypotheses. Further, he has pointed to the quantification of texts through thematic analysis, citing its use to counter the charge of anecdotalism. Bryman (2012) views the epistemological argument against mixed methods research, which focuses upon embedded methods and opposing paradigms as increasingly unconvincing compared with the technical argument which privileges data-collection and data-analysis techniques and sees them as capable of being fused. In this study I adopted an interpretivist epistemology with both the research methods used.

In the next section the decision to use a mixed methods research strategy to meet these requirements is explained.

Research Strategy

The decision was taken to employ a mixed methods research strategy in this study. Bryman (2012) has defined mixed methods research as research that incorporates both quantitative research and qualitative research within a single study, adding that "the quantitative and the qualitative data deriving from mixed methods research should be mutually illuminating" (p. 628). Whilst Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner (2007 p. 123) stated that the reason for utilising mixed methods research was to achieve both "breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration," a view that resonated with the aims of the current study.

Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2015) state that two key considerations when designing mixed methods research are sequencing of the methods and whether the methods have equal status or not. In the current study a two-phase, sequential design was chosen - a survey followed by one-to-one interviews - which can be represented by the formula "quant $\rightarrow$ QUAL" (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018); case denoting that the qualitative phase (interviews) was the dominant data source. As already introduced in chapter 1 this research strategy is perhaps most easily visualised through an archaeological metaphor. The territory to be studied, internal coaches in organisations, could be visualised as a large field. The literature review undertaken in preparation for the research study had unearthed little evidence of what was beneath the field's surface. Though there were lots of opinions about what was in the field there was little evidence to support these opinions. A two-phase strategy was adopted to explore the field/internal coaches. In the first phase a large area of the territory was scanned using an on-line questionnaire survey, in the way that an archaeologist would use ground penetrating radar to survey the field. Analysis of this scan data enabled decisions to be taken about where to conduct more detailed explorations within the field and 20 trenches were excavated: 20 one-to-one interviews. Much of the richness uncovered about the experience of being an internal

coach came from these interviews/trenches (hence QUAL). However, the effectiveness of these excavations was due in large part to the results of the initial survey which identified the most promising areas to dig. The success of the study relied on combining the two approaches.

The decision was taken to conduct the initial 'scan' of internal coaches' experiences by using an on-line questionnaire. Survey questionnaires are widely used to access large populations of interest to the researcher and gather data from the target population by asking participants to address specific questions (Bryman, 2012). The availability of on-line survey tools, capable of distribution via e-mail and social media appeared to offer a way to connect with a large number of internal coaches. Self-completion questionnaires have the advantages of being low-cost and straightforward to administer, facilitate the collection of a lot of data quickly, and are convenient for participants (Bryman, 2012; Gray, 2014). And as described later, they can be distributed via gatekeepers, propagating a snowball sample, facilitating access to internal coaches beyond the direct reach of the researcher. They do though have disadvantages: no opportunity to probe participants based upon their initial answers, limited control over who actually answers, restricted questionnaire length, and low response rates (Bryman, 2012; Gray, 2014). However, a survey was felt to be the most practical way to access the experiences of a large sample of internal coaches, the benefits outweighing the drawbacks. In addition, by asking coaches who were willing to provide contact details, a survey created the opportunity to recruit internal coaches to take part in the second phase of the research: one-to-one interviews.

Gray (2014 p. 382) states that interviews are an appropriate research technique if "the research…. is largely exploratory, involving, say, the examination of feelings or attitudes." For him, "[a]t the root of interviewing, then, is the intent to understand the lived experiences of other people, and the meaning they make from that experience" (p. 383), which was the aim of this research. He further acknowledges that interviewing can be used in conjunction with a survey technique to follow up issues emerging from the survey data, which was the strategy adopted.

To summarise, the research strategy chosen was mixed methods research: an online questionnaire survey followed by one-to-one interviews. The aim, by combining these two research methods, to be able to access the experiences of a wide range of internal coaches, and to be able to explore elements of those lived experiences in depth. However, whilst this was the strategy finally adopted, other research methodologies were initially explored.

Alternative research approaches considered

Before deciding to adopt the strategy of mixed methods research outlined above two other approaches were considered and rejected. These were participant observation and action research.

Both approaches would mean recruiting and working with a group of internal coaches over a period of time. Through direct observation of internal coaches in the environment where they carried out their coach role, participant observation offered the opportunity to 'see through their eyes', gain insight about the context within which they coached, and capture activities that coaches might take for granted and therefore not raise during an interview (Bryman, 2012). Action research offered the prospect of not only studying internal coaches but of bringing about change in the way they experienced that role (Gray, 2014). It would be an opportunity to collaborate with a group of fellow internal coaches, as co-researchers, to identify challenges they faced in being coaches and to work together to find and implement solutions. Both methodologies had, and still have, potential to increase our understanding of internal coaches, but were rejected for similar reasons, the main reason being the difficulty to gain and maintain access to participants for the length of time required.

The internal coaches in the study were all part-time coaches with full-time day-jobs; being a coach occupied only a small proportion of their time. From a participant observation perspective this meant that being able to spend sufficient time with the coaches to gain an in-depth view of their experience would be difficult and time consuming. Additionally, whilst it might be possible to negotiate access to scheduled coach/coachee interactions it would be very difficult to predict and arrange to observe coaches' interactions with other members of their role-set. Similarly, trying to bring together a group of coaches with full-time day-jobs to participate in regular action research sessions would also be challenging. Because these coaches were expected to coach for only a few hours each month it was felt that they would need to remain engaged with the research for an extended period of time to enable sufficient data to be collected or to be able to put into practice the solutions they identified during the action research process. Participant attrition was therefore felt to be a significant risk. Additionally, it was felt to be important that coaches with a range of experiences were engaged with the research which would require the involvement of coaches from a number of different organisations, resulting in significant logistical challenges. For these reasons it was felt that interviewing would be the most practical way to explore internal coaches' experience of being a coach.

Even if the challenges highlighted above could be overcome two other issues were identified which suggested the survey/interview strategy over participant observation or action research. The first was the role of the survey in being able to access a wide range of internal coaches and in recruiting some of those internal coaches to take part in a further phase of research. It was felt that without such an approach the number and range of participants that could be identified to take part in the study would be limited. The other concern identified was the challenge of overcoming issues of confidentiality if the researcher was to spend time embedded with internal coaches watching them work and talking to the stakeholders they engaged with. However, ultimately the decision not to

pursue either a participant observation or action research strategy was taken because the risk of losing participants before the research could be concluded was felt to be unacceptably high.

Locating the researcher in the research

Adopting an interpretivist position in the research was to acknowledge that I was connected to what I was researching. It required that I reflect on the impact of my presence in the research; that I be reflexive (Bryman, 2012). Bryman (2012) points out that when a researcher adopts an interpretivist approach they are not only exposing how their subjects interpret the world, but also how they, the researcher, interpret these findings: "there is a double interpretation going on" (p. 31). Between 2010 and 2017 I was an internal coach and my academic interest in coaching, and internal coaches in particular, stems from this experience: being an internal coach was important to me.

The focus of my research, how internal coaches experience the role, arose out of my own experiences of being an internal coach and the impact that I know the role has had upon me, both as a manager and a person. The conviction that this was an appropriate topic for research grew out of the realisation that internal coaches were largely unexplored in the academic literature. I was curious to know whether my own experiences were typical or atypical of internal coaches and unwilling to make assumptions based on the very limited evidence available. This raises the question: How have I acknowledged and addressed this connection in conducting my research?

The brief answer to this question is: by using what I had learnt through being a coach. I did not seek to eliminate myself from my research as someone working within a positivist paradigm would attempt to do – a feat I see as impossible – but instead tried to acknowledge my involvement in the way I conducted my research. As a coach I had often found myself having to recognise and keep to myself, that is hold, the views and feeling generated by my interaction with a coachee. I adopted a similar approach to the perceptions I had of being an internal coach. I acknowledged them to myself and held them rather than try to eliminate them. I carried them with me through the research, keeping an eye on them rather than trying to forget their existence. Below I set out, briefly, the steps I took during the research to manage these preconceptions.

As research on the internal coach experience was very limited, rather than use my own experience of being an internal coach I drew on research into the experience of a parallel group, mentors, to inform the questionnaire design. Volunteer internal coaches were recruited to take part in the design and testing phases of both the survey questionnaire and the interview guide. The on-line questionnaire distribution strategy focussed upon gaining access to the experiences of a large number of internal coaches. During interviews the aim was to listen to and record coaches' experiences of being an internal coach. I was conscious of the risk that putting two internal coaches in a room could

result in a co-creation process. The strategy therefore was to use my coaching skills – rapport building, using open questions, holding silences, focus on process leaving content to the coachee – to create an environment that encouraged the interviewee to share their experiences without my own experiences being shared. And analysis of written responses to open questions in the questionnaire and coding of interview transcripts were shared with supervisors and a colleague whose own PhD had involved coding, to challenge the approach used.

There is no intention in the foregoing discussion to claim that in taking the steps indicated I was able to remove myself from the research process. Instead, my intention is to highlight my consciousness of this reality, and to demonstrate the practical steps taken to address it. My aim has not been to eliminate myself from the research, but instead to enable my subjects – the internal coaches – to occupy the foreground.

Research methodology: What was done

So far, this chapter has set out the philosophical position that underpinned the research and made the connection between the position taken and the research strategy developed. The focus of the rest of the chapter is on describing the research methodology used; that is, describing what was done.

Internal coaches: A hard-to-reach population

A population which cannot be defined, and for which a sample frame cannot be determined has been described as a hidden or hard-to-reach population (Eland-Goossensen et al, 1997; Faugier and Sargeant, 1997; Handcock and Gile, 2011; Heckathorn, 2011), and this proved to be the case with internal coaches. Surveys of coaching in organisations consistently pointed to the significant and growing deployment of internal coaches (ICF, 2013; Ridler Report, 2013; 2016; Sherpa Executive Coaching Survey, 2016), but no register existed of either the organisations who employed internal coaches or of the coaches themselves. However, other hard-to-reach populations had been studied by researchers: drug addicts (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981; Eland-Goossensen et al, 1997), refugees (Bloch, 1999; 2004), Vietnam veterans (Sudman and Kalton, 1986), immigrants (Welch, 1975), non-heterosexual women (Browne, 2005). These hard-to-reach populations shared, along with internal coaches, the lack of a viable sampling frame, and the requirement to engage with gatekeepers to gain access to members of the population of interest, a technique known as snowball sampling.

However, a number of concerns have been raised regarding the use of snowball sampling as a technique to access and gather data from hard-to-reach populations. These relate to the

representativeness of the data, or the practicality of the procedure. Concerns about the representativeness of the sample, and therefore its validity and generalizability, centre on the risk of sample bias; under or over sampling of sub-groups within a population due to their differing characteristics (Eland-Goossensen et al, 1997; Faugier and Sargeant, 1997; Welsh, 1975; Woodley and Lockard, 2016). Faugier and Sargeant (1997) state that

> [T]he basic conceptual origin of snowball sampling is that the behaviour or 'trait' under study can be conceived as a social activity, where the target sample members are involved in the same kind of network with others who share the characteristic of interest. (p. 793)

It is clear therefore that any variations in this social activity, in relation to internal coaches for example variation in the degree of coach engagement with the wider coaching industry, or, in their employing organisation's openness about its use of coaches, could have an impact on the accessibility of internal coaches to the researcher. But, ultimately, as Browne (2005 p. 53) says: "Snowball sampling (as with most sampling techniques) relies on individuals' willingness to be involved in research and consequently some people will always be excluded."

The other concern raised by researchers in relation to snowball sampling is the issues relating to practicality. In this method participants are identified, and recruited, by gatekeepers; people who agree to support the researcher by opening up their network of potential research participants, and to encourage members of their network to take part in the research. Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) and Faugier and Sargeant (1997) highlight finding gatekeepers and initiating referral chains as challenges that the researcher has to overcome. Experience in the current study supported this concern: whilst two of the major coaching bodies supported my research, one other professional body declined because I was not a member; a trade magazine reacted positively to my request to publicise the research to coaches on their mailing list, but did not ultimately do so; and a major internal coaching scheme, whose leader I had met at a conference and discussed my research with, declined to ask their coaches to take part because they planned their own research and didn't want to "overburden" their coaches.

The other practical concern related to control of the sample. The researcher is not in direct contact with participants, and therefore verifying the eligibility of potential participants cannot be undertaken directly (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997). Indeed, Biernacki and Waldorf (1981 p. 148) state that "verification of eligibility… becomes increasingly problematic as the sources used to initiate referral chains become more distant and knowledge about the sources less personal." The way in which gatekeepers are briefed about the purpose of the research, and the definition of eligible participants was clearly important. The communication strategy had to support not only

communication between researcher and gatekeepers, but also between gatekeepers and potential participants, and between participants and other potential participants in extended networks. As Biernacki and Waldorf (1981 p. 143) stated “the researcher must actively and deliberately develop and control the sample’s initiation, progress, and termination.”

To summarise, in order to access as wide a sample of internal coaches as possible the nature of the internal coach population made it necessary to address the challenges of identifying and recruiting a range of gatekeepers, and of maintaining control of the sample through clear, but indirect communication.

Internal coach recruitment

Being the first phase of the research, recruitment of internal coaches to take part in the survey was crucial to the overall success of the study, both in terms of the amount of data gathered from completed questionnaires and the identification of volunteers to take part in the interview phase of the research. In order to maximise the number of participants, and mitigate as far as possible the issues highlighted in recruiting members of hard-to-reach populations, the snowball sampling strategy devised paid close attention to

- Recruitment of multiple gatekeepers
- Establishing the study as credible
- Clarifying the commitments being made to participants
- Active management of participant eligibility.

Before any contact was made with either gatekeepers or internal coaches, ethical approval was sought and granted by the York St John University Research Ethics Committee to conduct the survey, and then at a later date to interview coaches.

Significant effort was put into identifying and managing a large number of gatekeepers. Bloch (1999; 2004) emphasised the benefit of employing multiple gatekeepers to reduce the possibility of gathering data from only a single or limited number of networks within a population, and thus ensure a diverse sample. Thirty-nine gatekeepers were engaged directly. The gatekeepers targeted were those thought likely to have either extensive networks that would include internal coaches, or those believed to work with internal coaches and coaching schemes. These included coaching professional bodies, coaching groups, organisations employing internal coaches, coaching publications, academics in the coaching field, coach training providers and coaching scheme designers. Subsequently, a number of secondary gatekeepers also made contact having become aware of the study and offered

their help. In this way it was hoped that the gatekeepers would have the trust of potential participants, increasing the likelihood of their participation.

In addition to establishing the credibility of the study through the gatekeepers recruited, information about the study provided to gatekeepers to share with their networks also focussed upon the study's credibility. The communication made by a gatekeeper to their network – in this case members of the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) - shown in appendix 2 is an example of this strategy. The questionnaire itself was York St John University branded, and a brief introductory text was included which set out the purpose of the research, confirmed that the research had ethical approval from the university, and provided the e-mail addresses of myself and my supervisor to enable potential participants to raise concerns or ask questions (see appendix 1).

The communications issued also made clear commitments to potential participants to encourage their engagement. For example, it was made clear that the data individuals provided would be kept confidential, including from their organisation. This commitment was tested when one gatekeeper, a coaching scheme manager, requested a sub-set of data relating to his organisation's coaches as a condition of issuing the questionnaire. The commitment to individual confidentiality was reiterated and the request refused. Interestingly, the link to the questionnaire was subsequently shared with the organisation's coaches. In addition, the commitment was made to provide a summary of the research findings to all participants who requested a copy, which more than half of those who completed the questionnaire did.

Clear, consistent communication was also recognised as important to ensure that those who took part in the research were from the target population: part-time internal coaches. It was made clear to all gatekeepers that the target subjects of the research were internal coaches, and the name 'internal coach' was used consistently in all texts issued to gatekeepers for onwards communication to their networks. As a further step to ensure that the questionnaire was only completed by the internal coaches that the research was aimed at the first question on the questionnaire was a gate question (see appendix 1). Participants were asked whether the definition given described their practice as an internal coach. Those who said 'yes' could go on to the rest of the questionnaire. Those who responded 'no' were thanked for their engagement but not allowed to continue. Two coaches did make contact to query why they had not been allowed to complete the questionnaire, but both were full-time internal coaches and accepted the explanation that part-time internal coaches were the target of the research.

At the end of the survey participants were asked whether they would be willing to take part in a further phase of research, and if so, to provide an e-mail address to enable them to be reached. Of the 484 coaches who took part in the survey 234 (48%) provided contact details. The decision was

taken to conduct interviews face-to-face if possible, rather than by telephone or video, which meant recruiting coaches who were based in the UK. This decision was made because my experience was of holding coaching conversations rather than of conducting interviews. Face-to-face it was hoped that these coaching skills could be used to build trust and establish a rapport with those being interviewed and create an environment in which interviewees would feel able to share their experiences of being an internal coach. Two further selection criteria were applied in determining the pool of coaches from which interviewees would be recruited. Those volunteers who had not completed the whole of the questionnaire including providing answers to the two open questions were excluded as were those who indicated that, when they completed the questionnaire, they had been internal coaches for less than one year. These criteria were included for two reasons. Firstly, rich data on the experience of being an internal coach was sought and it was felt that those who had been coaches for less than one year would have had few experiences to share. Secondly, interviewing was recognised to be a resource hungry process and it was important to minimise the risk of getting a limited data return for the resources being committed. It was felt that someone who had not responded to some parts of the questionnaire might be similarly unforthcoming during an interview, resulting in a poor return on the resources invested. Analysis of the data available enabled a group of 76 coaches who fulfilled these selection criteria to be identified, and though it was impossible to be certain that they were all UK based, interviewees were sought from this pool.

In order to access a range of internal coaches' experiences the goal was set of recruiting coaches for interview from between six and eight organisations. An attempt was also made to replicate in the interview sample, as far as possible, the demographics of the survey sample in relation to length of service as a coach, time spent coaching, frequency of supervision attended, and position in the organisation. Comparison of the interview sample with the survey sample, set out in appendix 3, shows that this was broadly achieved. Four or five coaches were written to at a time, enabling their responses to be assessed and the logistics of setting up and conducting the interviews to be managed. The letter sent to each potential interviewee highlighted their previous involvement with the research by completing the survey and their offer at that time to support further research. It then set out the aim now to interview internal coaches to explore in more detail their experiences. The letter then set out what would be involved, re-stressed the confidential nature of their involvement, and asked them to confirm that they would be willing to take part (the letter is reproduced in appendix 4). The focus initially was on recruiting coaches believed to be based in the north west of England where I was based. The recruitment area was then extended, first to the northeast of England and finally into the south of England in order to achieve the desired interview sample.

In total, 31 internal coaches were approached to be interviewed and 20 agreed to be interviewed. A breakdown of the interviewees is provided in appendix 6. Of the 11 who were not interviewed, one e-mail address was not valid, one coach declined to take part, and one coach only responded weeks after the request was made, by which time other coaches in that organisation had already been interviewed so their offer was politely declined. The other eight coaches in this group did not respond to the request to interview them. The procedure adopted with coaches who did not respond initially was to send a follow-up request two weeks after the first approach, but, that if no response was still forthcoming to move on. Two of the 20 coaches interviewed asked for, and received, details of the interview questions prior to agreeing to take part, and one coach made contact by telephone to discuss what was involved before confirming their involvement.

Having outlined how internal coaches were recruited to take part in the study, the next section sets out the process of data collection.

Data collection

This section describes the design, testing and deployment of both the questionnaire used to conduct the initial survey and the interview guide developed to support the interviews conducted.

Survey

A number of steps were taken in the design of the questionnaire in order to maximise the success of the survey. A short introduction explained the purpose of the research, confirmed that it had ethical approval from the University's research ethics committee, and that participant's responses would be confidential. Questions aimed at gathering factual information relating to the coach's practice were put at the beginning of the questionnaire, as it was felt that they would be less contentious for participants, and therefore less likely to cause participants to abandon the questionnaire, uncompleted (Dillman, Smyth and Christian, 2014). Internal coaches' perceptions of their coach role were explored through their reaction to 36 statements. These statements were randomly ordered in the questionnaire, and the polarity of some statements was switched in order to be able to identify any participants exhibiting a set response (Bryman, 2012). In addition, two open questions were included to give participants the opportunity to express their views in their own words. Testing prior to launch also confirmed that the questionnaire could be completed within 15-20 minutes, which was felt to be an acceptable length of time to ask participants to give up.

The 36 statements in the questionnaire were developed around six concepts developed from research on mentors. A review of the coaching literature (chapter 2) had established that there had

been very little research reported on the experience of being an internal coach. However, Garvey (2011; 2014) and Western (2012) had suggested a connection between internal coaches and mentors through volunteerism, and there was a body of research that had explored motivations to mentor. The decision was taken to construct the main section of the questionnaire, which sought to explore internal coaches' perceptions of their experience of being a coach, around these motivations to mentor research findings. Table 3.1 summarises the mentor research findings, discussed in chapter 2, and the concepts identified that would be explored through the questionnaire that was constructed.

Table 3.1 Research concepts used in survey, based upon factors impacting motivation-to-mentor

Factors identified from the motivation to mentor research literature	**Concept to be explored by the questionnaire**
Desire to help others; desire to pass on knowledge; personal gratification in seeing others grow and succeed; pride (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Kram, 1985; Orly, 2008; Terrion and Leonard, 2010).	Am I adding value as a coach?
Increased visibility; organisational recognition (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997).	Is the contribution I make as a coach recognised by my organisation?
Positive factors - Organisational support for employee learning and development; line manager support to act as a mentor. Inhibiting factors – time/work demands (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Moreno-Jimenez and Villodres, 2010; Orly, 2008).	Do I feel supported to be a coach by my organisation?
Increased personal learning; career development aspirations (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002; Orly, 2008; Van Emmerik, Baugh and Euwema, 2005).	Does being a coach benefit my career?
Freedom to make choices; control over the process; locus-of-control (Giles, 1977; Newby and Heide, 1992).	Do I have the freedom to be a coach alongside my day-job?
Capability and confidence to be a mentor (Newby and Heide, 1992).	Do I feel confident in my capability as a coach?

With a group of volunteer internal coaches from my own coaching scheme, statements were created that reflected these concepts in order to gather participants' feelings and perceptions about how their coaching practice was perceived within their organisation. A 5-part Likert scale was used to be able to measure the participant's attitude to each statement (Bryman, 2012)**.** Five statements were generated for each concept. Additionally, the group developed six statements that they felt connected with how they experienced the importance of being an internal coach. The statements created to explore each concept are reproduced in appendix 5.

Overall, the questionnaire sought to

- Ensure that study participants were members of the research target group by defining the nature of this group's coaching practice (question 1)
- Understand the nature of coaches' practice relating to training, qualifications, experience and workload (questions 2 to 8)
- Gather coaches' reasons for becoming an internal coach (questions 9 and 10)
- Access coaches' perceptions of their experience of being a coach (questions 11 to 46)
- Gather coaches' reflections on being an internal coach today (question 47)
- Recruit volunteers to take part in further research (questions 48 and 49).

The questionnaire is reproduced in appendix 1.

Prior to launch, the questionnaire was tested by 14 volunteer internal coaches from two organisations. The questionnaire language was English, but as it was hoped to access internal coaches from multiple countries volunteer testers were drawn from Poland, Belgium, France and Italy, as well as the UK to try to identify any risk of misunderstandings because of the way questions and statements were phrased. All the volunteers were asked to complete the questionnaire, and in addition were asked to address the following questions

1. Was the explanation of the purpose of the research clear?
2. Were the instructions for completing the questionnaire clear and easy to follow?
3. Did you find any of the questions, answer options or statements difficult to understand or ambiguous?
4. Did you find any of the questions or statements that you were asked to give a response to inappropriate?
5. How long did it take to complete the questionnaire?

As a result of the feedback received a number of modifications were made to the questionnaire. All changes suggested were aimed at improving clarity, with no concerns expressed about the appropriateness of the questions, statements, or the questionnaire as a whole. Most of the changes made were minor, however the answer options for question 4, which asked about accreditation to be a coach, were completely rewritten because the options given initially were held to be ambiguous. In addition, the open question – "Today, what are your reflections on 'being' an internal coach in your organisational context?" – was added at the suggestion of the testers to give participants the opportunity to share their personal reflections on being a coach.

The questionnaire was built on the SurveyMonkey platform and a link was issued to the first gatekeepers recruited in October 2016. By the time the questionnaire was closed, at the end of January 2017, 484 internal coaches had completed it. The decision to close the survey was taken once no further gatekeepers could be identified and the number of questionnaires being completed had dropped below three per week for two weeks. Of the 484 coaches who took part in the survey, 234 signalled their willingness to take part in the second phase of the research: interviews.

Interviews

The second phase of the research, one-to-one interviews, explored a number of aspects of the internal coach experience that analysis of the survey findings suggested warranted further investigation.

- The fit between internal coaches' coaching roles and their other organisational responsibilities
- How different stakeholder attitudes were experienced
- The support available to internal coaches
- The recognition internal coaches' coaching received
- What impact being a coach had on internal coaches and their motivation to continue coaching.

An interview guide was constructed that enabled these topics to be explored with interviewees and is reproduced in appendix 7.

The questionnaire had highlighted a number of areas to be further investigated. However, a semi-structured interview approach was adopted for two reasons. Firstly, the study was exploratory and therefore the interviewer had to be prepared to follow where the interviewee led (Bryman, 2012; Gray 2014). Secondly, my role, as interviewer, was to build trust and rapport with the coaches interviewed to generate interviewee self-disclosure of their experience (Roulston, 2010). In order to remain faithful to this position the interview guide constructed used broad, open questions, with the aim to encourage the internal coaches to reflect on and share their experiences.

Early drafts of the interview guide were shared with my supervisors, and helpful challenges about question overlap and suggestions for alternative question forms received. In addition, the first three interviewees were asked, after their interview was finished to comment upon the structure of the interview, the nature and order of the questions asked and the way it was conducted. All agreed to do so and made helpful comments and suggestions to improve the content and flow of the interview. By the end of this process the interview guide had the form reproduced in appendix 7 and

was used unchanged in the remaining interviews, though in practice the way it was used was never quite the same in any two interviews conducted: Wengraf (2001) was right in stating that semi-structured interviews involve extensive improvisation on the part of the interviewer.

Twenty interviews were conducted between July 2017 and February 2018. All interviews took place, at the interviewee's request, in their place of work, and were conducted face-to-face. The focus at the start of each interview was upon building a relationship with the interviewee, as if this was a coaching meeting. This involved self-disclosure about being an internal coach, explaining again what the research was about, emphasising the commitment to confidentiality, and offering interviewees the opportunity to ask questions. Finally, their permission was sought to record our conversation and their written consent to proceed obtained (the consent form is reproduced in appendix 8). After their interview interviewees were sent a copy of the consent form they had signed, which included on it my contact details. One interviewee requested a copy of the audio recording which I provided. All interviews were audio recorded and then professionally transcribed. Transcripts were checked and corrected prior to initial coding.

During the interviews themselves my focus was upon trying to create a safe space in the room that would enable the interviewees to share their experiences, and to share with me the impact that these experiences had had upon them. Therefore, my interventions into the conversation were, as far as I was able, aimed at providing reassurance that what was being shared was appropriate, seeking clarity, especially when interviewees talked about matters specific to their coaching scheme or organisation, and probing for further detail to try to get interviewees to share the richness of their experiences. I did not seek to co-create meaning with interviewees by sharing with them my own experiences and views.

As already stated, the final interviews were completed in February 2018, however, the decision to stop interview data collection was not made until September 2018. This gap reflected time taken to analyse interview transcripts in an attempt to determine whether new insights were still emerging from later interviews and that therefore further interviewees should be recruited, or, whether data saturation appeared to have been achieved. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006 p. 60) acknowledge that saturation is the "gold standard" by which sample size is determined, but Bryman (2012) states that it is impossible to determine upfront how many interviews will be necessary to achieve it. However, the broader the research objective, the larger the number of groups being compared, and the more heterogeneous the groups, the larger the sample size likely to be required to achieve saturation (Bryman, 2012). Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006), in a study of women's reproductive health in two African countries, found that data saturation was achieved after analysis of 12 interviews in their study of a "relatively homogeneous" group which had "fairly narrow

[research] objectives" (p. 75). A sample size of this order is supported by Collins (2010) who quotes numbers between 6 and 12 for the qualitative element of a mixed methods research. However, an analysis of more that 200 studies in the field of organisation and workplace research carried out by Saunders and Townsend (2016) identified that the sample size norm for qualitative interviews was between 15 and 60 participants, with a median for single group studies of 30. The decision was taken to treat the internal coaches as a single group and the goal set to recruit between 15 and 20 internal coaches to interview initially. This decision tried to balance the risks that if the sample size was too small achieving data saturation would be difficult, against the opposing risk that if the sample size was too large, "it is difficult to extract thick, rich data" (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007 p. 242). It was recognised however, that the sample size might be adjusted based upon analysis of the data collected. In the event, analysis of the 20 interviews conducted showed that no new insights had emerged from the last group of coaches interviewed and the decision was made to halt the data collection process.

Data analysis

Data collected via the questionnaire, in line with the aim of broadly surveying the internal coach experience, was analysed graphically in order to look for patterns within the large dataset. Coach practice data was represented as pie charts and coaches' responses to the 36 statements were clustered into the seven concepts around which they had been constructed and represented as bar charts. This visual presentation helped to highlight areas of internal coach agreement and those areas where views diverged. The aim was to explore and try to understand how internal coaches experienced their role rather than hypothesis testing, and employing descriptive statistics supported this goal. In addition, this approach recognised that snowball sampling resulted in a non-probability sample which could not be considered representative of the internal coach population as a whole (Bryman, 2012) and avoided the risk of the analysis going beyond what the methodology used could support. This limitation of the methodology is acknowledged and discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.

Coaches' responses to the two open questions in the questionnaire – Q9 What were your reasons for becoming an internal coach? and Q47 Today, what are your reflections on 'being' an internal coach in your organisational context? – were subjected to thematic analysis. A codebook was created (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012) to enable quantification of the responses given. The codes were identified during multiple readthroughs of the data and a colleague whose own PhD had involved coding of written data was recruited to test the codes identified. First, using the initial draft of the codebook she independently coded approximately 20% of the data. Coding results were then compared, and differences discussed. As a result of this debate some codes were modified and several

codes combined because it was agreed that they were not sufficiently distinctive to stand alone. Part of the final codebook used to code the 467 responses to Q9 is reproduced in appendix 9. The refined codes were loaded into NVivo and the whole dataset of 840 responses to the two questions was coded. The results were then summarised in tabular form. The findings of the analysis of the survey data are described in chapter 4.

The interviews were transcribed, and thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) used to highlight patterns within the data. Thematic analysis was the approach chosen because it is a flexible analytical method, not tied to a particular methodology (Bryman, 2012), and is compatible with the interpretivist position taken in the research (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The research conducted was exploratory, and therefore, in line with Braun and Clarke (2006), attention was paid to staying close to the data during coding and theme identification. However, efforts were made to take the analysis beyond description of what coaches said and to offer an interpretation of the experiences they articulated in relation to the environment in which their coaching took place.

Analysis followed the process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006)

1. Initial readings of the interview transcripts, paying attention to, and noting down, thoughts triggered by the data – To demonstrate this a transcript of the interview with Phil Green and the notes made when the interview was subsequently reviewed are reproduced in appendix 17
2. Pursuing these initial ideas and starting to identify possible codes
3. Collation of codes, along with supporting data evidence from transcripts – A map of the key codes identified, and the data which underpinned some of the codes identified are reproduced in appendix 18
4. Exploration of how codes might come together into potential themes
5. Review of potential themes to test their fit with the data: was there sufficient data to support the theme? – A snapshot from the process of identifying themes and testing their fit with the data and with other themes is reproduced in appendix 19. A bridge is made between the candidate themes shown in this appendix and the final themes set out in chapter 5.
6. Test themes relative to other proposed themes: were the themes distinctive, or did they overlap?
7. Ultimately, decide whether the themes proposed were a fit with the overall data set

The provisional themes, and the evidence that supported them, were shared with supervisors and with the colleague who had supported the earlier coding of survey data, to be tested and challenged before being finalised.

Perhaps the best way to bring to life the process of identifying themes is through an example from the analysis. One of the themes eventually identified was 'I prioritise coaching', which captured how coaches took steps to ensure that they could continue coaching in spite of the pressure of their other organisational responsibilities, and perhaps, receiving limited support. This theme captured several codes that were identified in coaches' responses to being asked how they balanced their coaching and day-job roles. The code 'analyse, plan, do' captured coaches' descriptions of how they identified the capacity they had available for coaching and then committed to using that time for coaching. From the data it was also identified that coaches 'don't overcommit' in order to avoid conflict with their other responsibilities, but, that whilst sometimes work commitments had resulted in them reducing the amount of coaching they did, the issue was 'capacity not commitment'. Another code identified, 'coaching is important', captured that, in relation to their other organisational responsibilities, coaching was not seen as a lower priority. In a different part of the interviews, when discussing support for their coaching role, the code 'personal responsibility to access' was identified from the way coaches described how they made sure that they accessed the support they needed and described the lengths to which they went to achieve this. Looking across the data as a whole and the codes that had been identified, it was clear that coaches acted to ensure that they could coach: the theme 'I prioritise coaching' was created to recognise this. Subsequently, as more themes were identified, it became clear that 'I prioritise coaching' was part of a larger theme, 'Believer', which incorporated three other themes as well: I'm making a difference; Coaching is for life, not just for coachees; coaching benefits the coach. The themes ultimately identified within the data by the thematic analysis that was carried out are mapped and described in chapter 5.

Outcome

The study set out to gather a broad range of internal coaches' experiences of being a coach and to explore in depth the experiences of some internal coaches. The initial survey captured the opinions of 484 internal coaches, drawn from a range of organisations. Specific data on participant's organisation and location were not requested as part of the survey because of concerns that this might put off some coaches. However, almost 50% of participants provided an e-mail address, and analysis of these e-mail addresses and participants written answers to Q9 and Q47 found evidence that coaches were based in at least 15 countries across Europe, North and South America, Asia, and Australia and New Zealand. In addition, coaches were identified to be working in at least 67 different

organisations. The geographical coverage achieved and the number of organisations for which participants worked indicated that a broad sample of internal coaches had been achieved.

The sample size for the current study (n=484) was also large in the context of research on coaches. A survey of coaching research by Garvey, Stokes and Megginson (2014) found that survey sample sizes were typically smaller than achieved in this study. For example, surveys have been conducted which looked at coaching practices in New Zealand - n=59 coaches (Brooks and Wright, 2007), the nature and focus of coaching in the UK - n=245 coaches (Jenkins et al, 2012), goal orientation - n=194 coaches (David, Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2014), Australian coaches' views on supervision - n=174 coaches (Grant, 2012), and a 'large-scale study' of the contributions of relationship, personality match, and self-efficacy to executive and workplace coaching - n=366 coaches (de Haan et al, 2016). However, there are almost no surveys specifically of internal coaches; an exception being St John-Brooks (2010; 2009) study that looked at the dilemmas internal coaches faced in their coaching practices - n=123 internal coaches. Relative to these studies the size of this survey, where n=484, can be considered a large sample.

In addition to the survey data collected, interviews were conducted with 20 internal coaches drawn from nine organisations (note - this figure of nine treats the NHS as one organisation, though the three coaches interviewed were from different Trusts in the North West of England). Of the nine organisations, three were from the private sector, five from the public sector and one from the not-for-profit sector (see appendix 6). The aim, in recruiting coaches for interview, had been to match the composition of the interview sample with that of the survey sample in terms of position in the organisation, length of experience as a coach, coaching workload, and access to supervision. On the whole this was achieved, as appendix 3 demonstrates. On coaching experience both samples were predominantly made up of employees who had been coaches for between one and five years, and on coach workload the majority of coaches in both samples coached for five hours per month or less. With regards to supervision, whilst the composition of the two samples did not wholly align, both contained similar proportions of coaches who received little or no supervision and of coaches who received more frequent supervision. Looking at role in the organisation, both samples are made up predominantly of managers and senior manager/directors, however coaches who were an employee or supervisor/team leader were underrepresented in the interview sample. This reflected the fact that, of the six asked, only one coach from this group made themselves available for interview.

In summary, the mixed methods research employed in this study did achieve the twin aims of exploring the internal coach experience broadly through engagement with a large and diverse group of coaches, and deeply, by exploring with 20 coaches their individual experiences of being an internal coach.

Summary

This chapter has set out the researcher's commitment to interpretivism and made the connection between this epistemology and the research methodology used in the study: mixed methods research. It has described how the research was carried out: an on-line questionnaire survey distributed via gatekeepers followed by interviews with coaches recruited via the questionnaire. A number of challenges are acknowledged, for example the necessity of treating internal coaches as a hard-to-reach population, and the steps taken to overcome these problems set out. Finally, the case is made that the study has been successful in its aim of generating a large, rich data set of the experiences of internal coaches.

In the next two chapters the findings from this research are set out. Chapter 4 describes the findings generated from the survey, and in chapter 5 the themes generated from the interviews are described.

Chapter 4

Research Findings: Survey Questionnaire

Introduction

In this chapter and the next chapter, the findings from the research will be set out. Given the lack of prior research on the internal coach experience the research strategy adopted was to first conduct an exploratory survey of a large group of internal coaches via an on-line questionnaire. In line with the interpretivist position taken the focus of the survey was on collecting internal coaches' experiences of, and attitudes towards, their coach role. Survey numbers served to indicate how common certain experiences and beliefs were among the respondents. The findings from the survey facilitated decision making about which aspects of the internal coach experience would be explored in greater depth through one-to-one interviews with internal coaches.

The current chapter describes the findings from the exploratory survey that was conducted initially via an on-line questionnaire which 484 internal coaches completed either in-full or in-part. The purpose of the survey was to conduct an initial scan of this group, exploring the nature of internal coaches' coaching practice, what had motivated them to become an internal coach, what their experience was of being an internal coach, and the impact that experience had had upon them. The survey findings are set out in four sections

1. *Research participants' coaching practice* – collation of the data relating to coaches' training, qualification, experience and workload
2. *Reasons for becoming an internal coach* – thematic analysis of motivations given for wishing to be a coach
3. *The experience of being an internal coach: responses to thirty-six statements* – collation of coaches' responses to statements about different aspects of being an internal coach
4. *Reflections on being an internal coach* – thematic analysis of what about their coaching coaches chose to highlight when offered the opportunity to reflect on being an internal coach.

Based upon the analysis of survey data decisions were then made about which aspects of the internal coach experience and its impact should be investigated more deeply through one-to-one interviews. The chapter following this one will report on the findings from those interviews subsequently carried out with 20 internal coaches who were recruited from the survey participants.

Research participants' coaching practice

The first section of the survey questionnaire asked participants to define their coaching practice: position held in their organisation; basis of their competence to coach; extent of coaching undertaken; and whether their practice is subject to supervision. Participants' responses are summarised graphically in appendix 14.

The majority of coaches taking part in the survey (82%) defined themselves as having a management role in their organisation (appendix 14, chart 1), with 43% stating that they were senior managers or directors. Formal training to become a coach had been undertaken by all but two survey participants (chart 2). For the majority (72%) training took place in their organisation, the provision evenly split between in-house and external resources. For the remainder coach training took place outside their organisation, though only 4% of training was described as a university course. It is perhaps unsurprising therefore that 70% of participants said that they held no coaching qualification (chart 3). The vast majority of the 30% with a qualification held a post graduate certificate or post graduate diploma. Whilst only 30% of coaches said they had a qualification, 78% reported that they were an accredited coach (chart 4). Of those 53% said they were accredited by an external body and 47% said that they were accredited by their organisation. Length of time spent as a coach varied (chart 5): 18% had coached for less than one year, 60% for between one and five years, and 22% for more than five years. The survey specifically targeted part-time internal coaches and when it came to the amount of time these part-time coaches spent coaching (chart 6) most (79%) coached for five hours or less each month: 39% coached for only one or two hours each month. Only 7% of survey participants said that they coached for more than 10 hours each month. Coaches were asked whether they had supervision as part of their coaching to gauge what support they received for their practice (chart 7). The results indicate that supervision is accessed widely. Eighty-four per cent of participants said that they had supervision, and 75% indicated that they had supervision at least twice per year.

Reasons for becoming an internal coach

Survey participants were asked "What were your reasons for becoming an internal coach?" (Q9) and 467 provided written answers. Analysis of participants responses led to the identification of 22 codes which were grouped into four themes. The result of the analysis is set out in appendix 15, and the themes created, and the major codes associated with each theme are briefly summarised in table 4.1 below. Note that some participant responses were divided into more than one code.

Table 4.1. Summary of coding analysis of responses to Q9 – What were your reasons for becoming an internal coach?

Theme	Most common codes
For self (n=336)	• Learn of develop skills (n=123) • Improve as a manager of leader (n=39) • Curiosity, interest in (n=46)
For colleagues (n=188)	• Support development of colleagues (n=183)
For Organisation (n=98)	• Expected to coach (n=30) • Improve performance (n=22)
Previous experience (n=113)	• Previously a coachee (n=64)

'For Self'

The largest theme was 'For self' (appendix 15). Seventy-two per cent of participants indicated that their motivation for becoming an internal coach was, whether wholly or in part, linked to self. Within this, 12 codes were identified. Fifty-two per cent of coded responses in this theme related to capability improvement, within which there were three codes: 'to learn or develop skills'; 'to improve as a manager or leader'; and 'self-understanding'.

Within the 'to learn or develop skills' code participants often described their reasons for becoming an internal coach as personal-, self-, or professional development and/or spoke generally of learning- or developing skills. A few spoke of developing or using specific skills, most frequently listening or questioning. Occasionally the skills development was explicitly linked to getting more out of their team, doing their day-job better or improving relationships with stakeholders. For some participants development was specifically to 'improve as a manager or leader'. These participants wished to either develop or improve their management or leadership skills, or, less frequently, to develop their management or leadership style. For a small number of participants becoming a coach was an opportunity to learn more about themselves, their motivations and assumptions, perhaps to challenge their thinking and approach (coded 'self-understanding').

Twenty-four per cent of the responses coded in this theme related to respondents having some, limited knowledge of coaching which prompted them to apply to become an internal coach: 'curiosity, interest in' and 'personal belief in coaching' (appendix 15). Within the 'curiosity, interest in' code respondents stated that coaching was something that, based on what little knowledge they had, they were already interested in, and for some, that their organisation having or launching an internal coaching scheme was their opportunity to pursue that interest. Responses coded 'personal belief in coaching' indicated how for some, that coaching was a good thing could be seen as an act of faith.

Respondents were convinced of coaching's benefits and believed it could add value for their colleagues and the organisation.

A smaller group within the theme 'for self' (16% of responses coded) appeared to hope that becoming an internal coach would benefit them professionally: 'Gain qualifications'; 'increase visibility'; 'increase network'; 'increase influence'; 'enhance career'; or 'coach beyond current organisation' (appendix 15).

One further code was identified within the theme 'for self': 'personal gratification'. Participants indicated that they found helping others enjoyable and thought coaching would be an additional way to help others, though half the answers in this group indicated that the respondents had conflated becoming a coach with being a coach.

'For colleagues'

The second largest theme identified was 'For colleagues' (appendix 15). Forty per cent of participants indicated that supporting their colleagues was a motivating factor in their becoming an internal coach. The major code, 'support development of colleagues', captured participants' desire to support, help or develop colleagues. The strength of this motivation was demonstrated by the frequent use of words such as "passionate," "love to," "desire to," or "genuine interest" to describe the importance of being able to help. Internal coaches wanted to help colleagues achieve their potential, to overcome challenges or issues, to achieve their objectives, to find their own solutions, or to gain new insights, and a small number of participants highlighted the role of coaching in supporting colleagues during periods of change. A very small number of coaches identified sharing their own knowledge or expertise with colleagues as their specific motivation: 'share knowledge with colleagues'. It is arguable that these participants proposed to act more like mentors than coaches.

'For organisation'

The smallest of the four themes identified was 'For organisation'. Twenty-one per cent of participants indicated that supporting their organisation was a factor in their decision to become an internal coach. Five codes were identified: 'improve performance', 'develop coaching culture', 'expected to coach', 'told to coach', and 'give something back' (appendix 15).

'Improve performance' captured coaches' desire to improve the organisation, whether generally or more specifically: improve performance or make the organisation more effective, or develop its people or talent. Allied to the desire to support organisational improvement a small group wanted to support the introduction or development of a coaching culture in their organisation: coded

'develop coaching culture'. For some participants supporting their organisation by becoming a coach was a way to repay their organisation for what it had done for them: 'give something back'.

Within the theme 'For organisation' there were a group for whom becoming an internal coach was not their idea (41% of respondents coded in this theme). 'Expected to coach', captured those who stated that coaching was expected of them because of their role in the organisation. A small number of responses were coded 'told to coach'. For this group becoming a coach was suggested or recommended to them, perhaps by their line manager.

'Previous experience'

The final theme identifying why people decided to become an internal coach reflected some participants' prior involvement with coaching: 'Previous experience' (appendix 15). Twenty-four per cent of responses indicated that having previous experience of coaching or of using a coaching approach was a factor in participants' decision to become an internal coach. Within this theme three codes were identified: 'previously a coachee', 'previously a coach', and 'complementary to existing approach'.

Every participant within the code 'previously a coachee' had been coached, benefited from that experience, and applied to become an internal coach as a result. Almost all stated that by becoming a coach they wanted others to be able to benefit from being coached in the way that they had, and for some it was specifically a way of giving something back for their positive experience. A smaller group had already trained and qualified as a coach prior to applying to be an internal coach (coded 'previously a coach'). For these people the existence, or launch, of an internal coaching scheme in their organisation was an opportunity to use their existing coaching experience. The final code, 'complementary to existing approach', identified participants who saw coaching as a good fit with either their existing skills and experience or with their values and beliefs.

Ninety-three per cent of internal coaches said that being a coach had fulfilled their initial reasons for wanting to become a coach.

The experience of being an internal coach: Responses to thirty-six statements

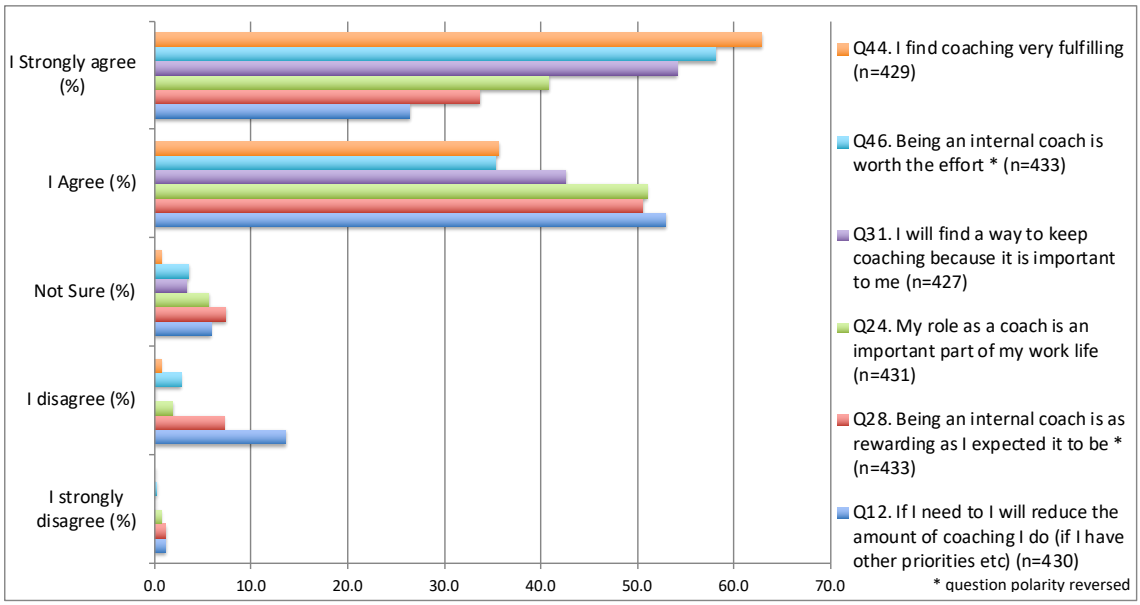
In the survey internal coaches were asked to give their reaction to 36 statements (Q11 to Q46) using a 5-point Likert scale to explore their experience of the coach role (summarised in appendix 10). The aim was that through participants' responses to the statements a picture would be generated of

- The importance of the internal coach role to those who take it on
- The freedom coaches feel they have to be a coach alongside their day-job
- The support they experience to be a coach
- How confident they feel in their capability as a coach
- The value they believe they add as coaches
- The extent to which the contribution their coaching makes to their organisation is recognised
- Whether being a coach has benefited their career.

These are depicted graphically in Figures 4.1 to 4.7.

Internal coaches' responses to statements Q24, Q28, Q31, Q44 and Q46 suggested strongly that being a coach is important to them (Fig. 4.1). Ninety-eight per cent of participants agreed that coaching was very fulfilling (Q44); 92% that their coach role was an important part of their professional life (Q24). Similarly, 94% disagreed that coaching was not worth the effort involved (Q46). Ninety-seven per cent of the internal coaches agreed with the statement 'I will find a way to keep coaching because it is important to me' (Q31), whilst none disagreed. The proportion of participants taking a contra view of these four statements – disagreeing with Q24, Q31 or Q44, or agreeing with Q46 – did not exceed 3%. Additionally, 85% disagreed that being an internal coach was not as rewarding as they had expected it to be (Q46).

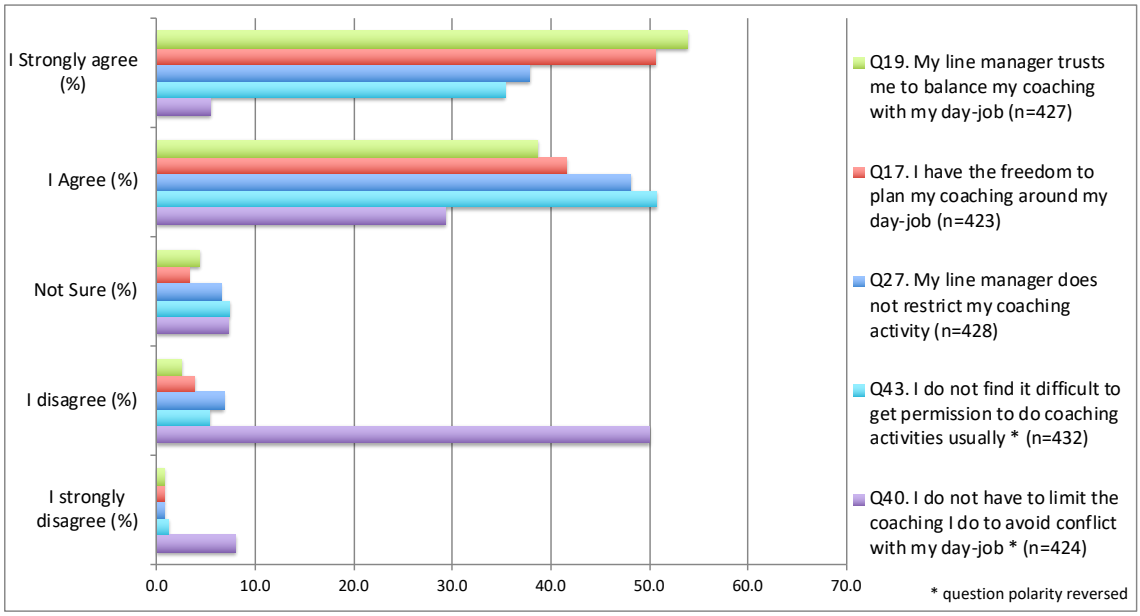
Fig. 4.1 How important is being a coach to internal coaches?



That the views expressed about the importance of coaching to participants were strongly held is demonstrated when the proportion of 'strongly agree' responses (or 'strongly disagree' if appropriate) is ranked for the 36 statements (Appendix 12): Q44 (coaching is fulfilling) was ranked first, Q46 (disagreeing that coaching is not worth the effort) second, and Q31 (I will find a way to keep coaching) third. Similarly, the weighted average scores for each statement (Appendix 13) show that Q44, Q31 and Q46 were again ranked the three highest. The findings strongly suggest that internal coaches are aligned in finding coaching fulfilling, worth the effort involved, and important enough to want to find a way to be able to keep coaching.

Responses to statements Q17, Q19, Q27 and Q43 suggested that most internal coaches feel they have flexibility and freedom in carrying out their coaching role alongside their other organisation responsibilities (Fig. 4.2). Ninety-three per cent agreed that they were trusted to balance coaching and day-job (Q19); 92% that they had the freedom to plan coaching around their other roles (Q17); and 86% that their coaching was not restricted by their line manager (Q27) and that they had no difficulty getting permission to coach (Q43). These findings might be expected given that 82% of the coaches described themselves as having a managerial role. However, whilst analysis of the negative responses to Q17, Q19, Q27 and Q43 indicated that those describing their role as either employee or supervisor/team leader were overrepresented – 29% to 37% of negative responses versus 18% of the survey sample population – more employees and supervisors/team leaders felt they had freedom and flexibility to coach than did not and being a manager or senior manager/director did not guarantee freedom to coach.

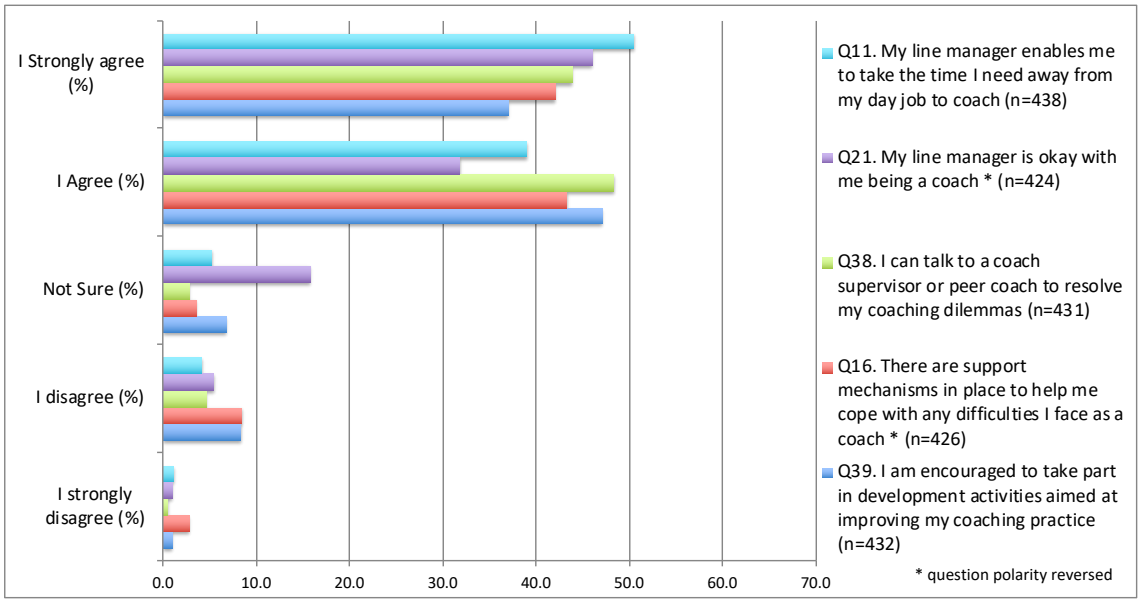
Fig. 4.2 Do internal coaches feel they have the freedom and flexibility to manage how they fit coaching in with their day-job?



When the statements aimed at exploring how important coaching was to internal coaches and whether they felt they had freedom to coach were developed two additional statements were created which have not yet been discussed: Q12 – 'If I need to I will reduce the amount of coaching I do (if I have other priorities etc)' – to assess the importance (Fig. 4.1), and Q40 – 'I have to limit the coaching I do to avoid conflict with my day-job" – to assess the freedom coaches felt they had (Fig. 4.2). Because coaches regarded their coaching as important, and because they said they had freedom and flexibility to coach alongside their other organisational roles it seemed likely that participants would disagree with these statements, but this was not the case. Eighty per cent of internal coaches agreed that they would reduce the amount of coaching they did when they had other priorities (Q12; Fig. 4.1) and more coaches said that they limited the coaching they did to avoid a conflict with their day-job – 58% - than did not have to – 35% (Q40; Fig. 4.2): participants viewed these statements differently to the others in these two groups.

Internal coaches' views on statements Q11, Q16, Q21, Q38 and Q39 suggested that the majority of them feel that they are supported to be coaches (Fig. 4.3).

Fig. 4.3 Do internal coaches feel supported to be coaches in their organisation?

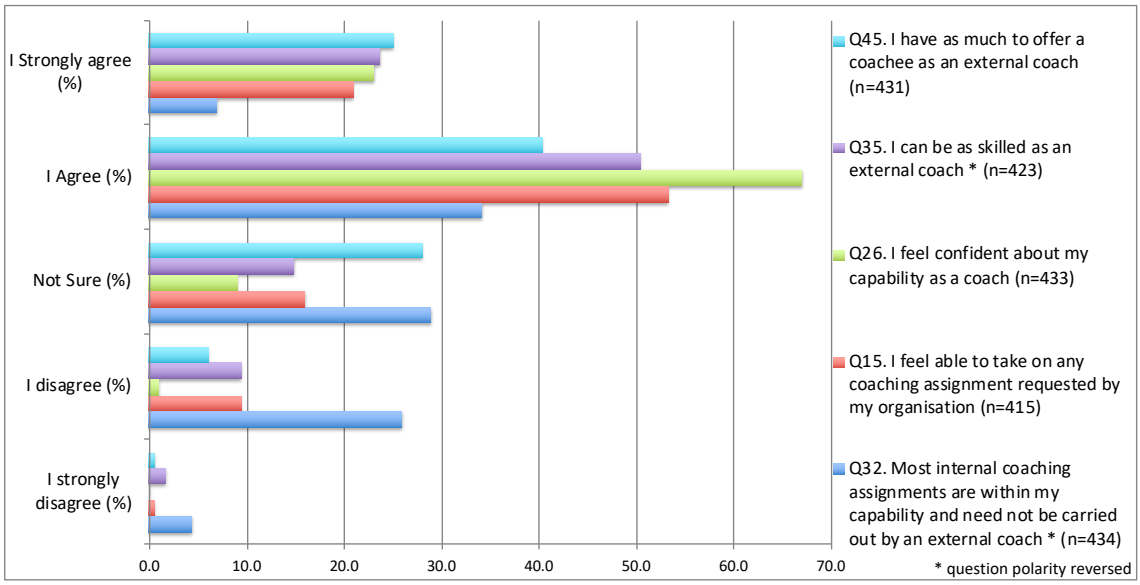


Ninety-two per cent agreed that they were able to talk to a supervisor or fellow coach if they were faced with a dilemma (Q38); 85% that there were coach support mechanisms in place (Q16); and 84% that that they were encouraged to undertake CPD to improve their coaching practice (Q39). These responses were in line with the assertion of 84% of coaches that they had supervision as part of their coaching practice (appendix 14). Ninety per cent agreed that their line manager enabled them to take

time out to coach (Q11), however, in response to the statement 'my line manager would rather I wasn't an internal coach' (Q21), although 78% disagreed 16% were 'not sure'.

Responses to statements Q15, Q26, Q32, Q35 and Q45 which sought to assess how confident internal coaches were in their capability to coach (Fig. 4.4) showed much less uniformity of belief across the population than had been seen in relation to the importance of coaching (Fig. 4.1), the freedom to coach felt (Fig. 4.2) or the support to coach experienced (Fig. 4.3). Variation in thought was most evident when internal coaches were asked to consider their capability in relation to external coaches, though 'strongly agree' responses across the five statements were low relative to other statements in the survey (Appendix 12) suggesting that many participants were not confident about agreeing with the assertions these statements made. So, whilst 90% of participants felt confident in their capability as a coach (Q26), with only 1% not, only 74% felt able to take on any assignment asked of them (Q15) or that they could be as skilled as an external coach (Q35), and only 65% agreed that they have as much to offer a coachee as an external coach (Q45).

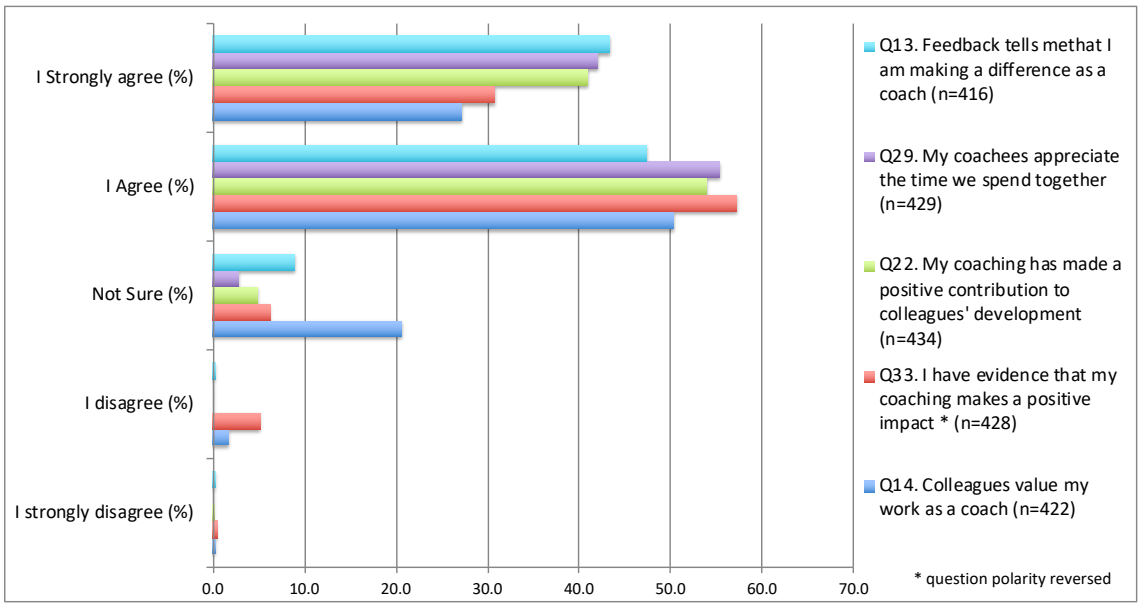
Fig. 4.4 Do internal coaches feel confident in their capability as a coach?



In response to the statement 'some coaching assignments are beyond my abilities and should be carried out by an external coach' (Q32) only 41% disagreed whilst 30% agreed. Four of the five statements resulted in high rates of 'not sure' responses: Q35 – 15%; Q15 – 16%, Q45 – 28% and Q32 – 29%; the latter two the second and third highest 'not sure' responses in the survey (Appendix 11) suggesting that for these internal coaches their status versus external coaches, whether in their own eyes or the eyes of their organisation, was unclear.

In contrast to the picture with regard to capability, coaches were clear that by coaching they are adding value (Fig. 4.5). Ninety-seven per cent felt that their coachees appreciated the time they spent together (Q29); 95% that their coaching had positively contributed to colleagues' development (Q22); 91% that feedback confirmed the impact they were having as a coach (Q13). Not more than two participants disagreed with these views. When asked if they have evidence to support their contribution (Q33) a small number – 6% – acknowledged that they did not, but 88% felt that they did. In contrast to their views based upon direct feedback, when asked whether their colleagues valued their work as coach (Q14), whilst 77% agreed that they did, 21% responded 'not sure', suggesting that some internal coaches are unclear about the perception of coaching in their organisation.

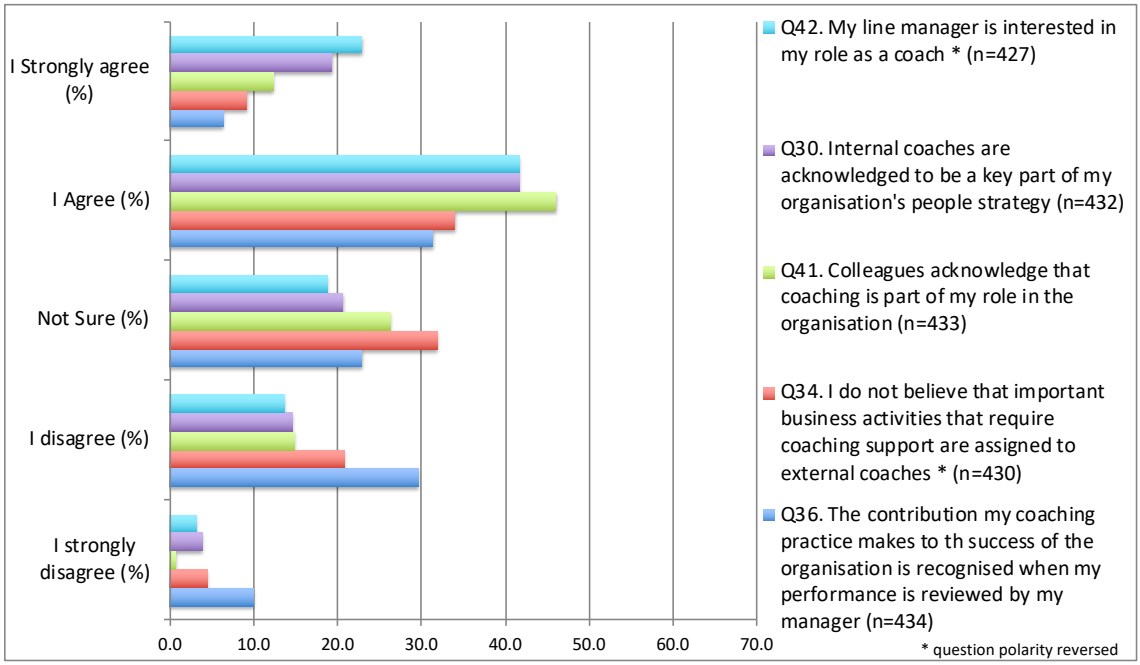
Fig. 4.5 Do internal coaches believe that as coaches they add value?



Internal coaches' responses to statements Q30, Q34, Q36, Q41 and Q42 suggested that many questioned whether their contribution as a coach was recognised (Fig. 4.6). Only 65% of participants felt their line manager did take an interest in their coaching (Q42); 61% that internal coaches were an acknowledged part of their organisation's people development strategy (Q30); and 58% that their colleagues acknowledged their coaching role (Q41). Fewer than half of respondents – 43% – felt that their organisation would use internal coaches rather than external coaches to support important business activities. 'Strongly agree' responses and weighted average scores for these statements were in the lowest quartile for the survey (Appendices 12 and 13), and 'not sure' responses in the highest quartile (Appendix 11). Most tellingly, more internal coaches disagreed with the statement 'the

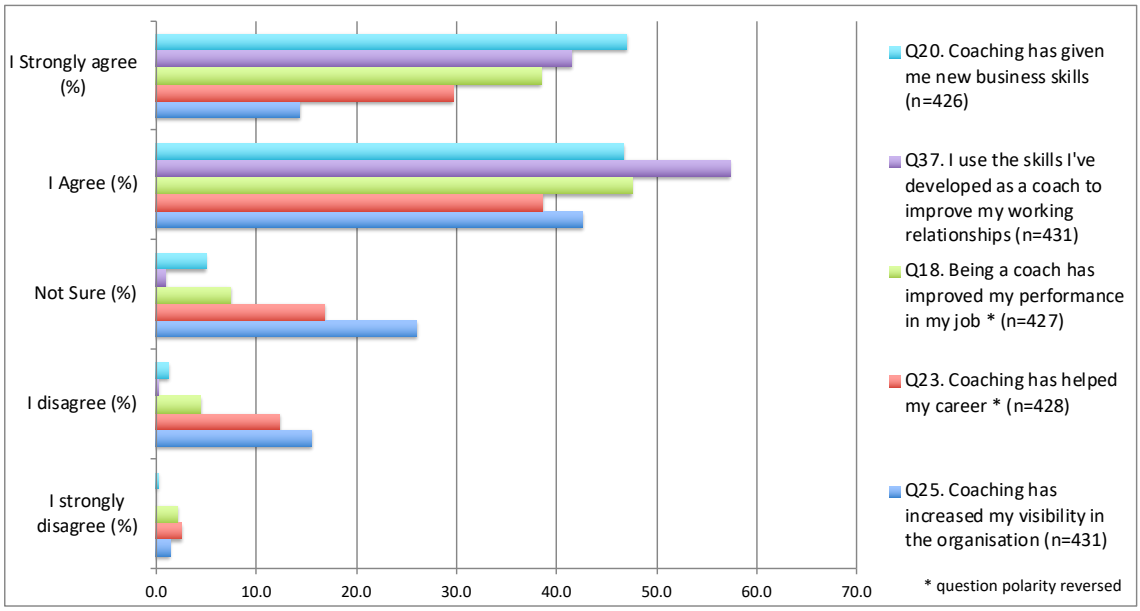
contribution my coaching practice makes to the success of the organisation is recognised when my performance is reviewed by my manager' (Q36) than agreed: 40% versus 38%.

Fig. 4.6 Do internal coaches feel that the contribution they make as a coach is recognised in their organisation?



Participants' responses to statements Q18, Q20, Q23, Q25 and Q37 suggested that the majority of internal coaches believe that being a coach has benefitted them (Fig. 4.7). However, some coaches appear to differentiate between the positive impact coaching has had on their own capabilities versus whether being a coach has improved their standing in the organisation. Ninety-nine per cent of coaches felt that the skills they had developed enabled them to improve their working relationships (Q37); 94% that coaching had given them new business skills (Q20); and 86% that their performance in their day-job had improved as a result (Q18). However, in contrast only 68% felt that being a coach had helped their career (Q23) and only 57% that it had increased their visibility within the organisation (Q25).

Fig. 4.7 Do internal coaches believe that being a coach benefits their career?



Summary

For the overwhelming majority of the more than 420 internal coaches who gave their reactions to the 36 statements it seems clear that being an internal coach is a positive, worthwhile experience. It is a role for which they feel they have support and through which they believe they make a positive difference. However, the reality of the coach experience is more complex than this picture might suggest.

The visibility of the role internal coaches perform appears to diminish with distance from the coaching act. It is direct feedback from coachees that makes the majority of internal coaches believe that they are adding value (Q13, Q22, Q29), their engagement with other coaches, coaching scheme management and supervision that makes them feel supported in their coaching (Q16, Q38, Q39). But many remain unsure whether those not directly involved in coaching either recognise or value their coaching work (Q14, Q41), whether internal coaches are known to be part of their organisation's people development strategy (Q30), or where internal coaches fit in their organisation's coaching strategy versus external coaches (Q34).

There is also, for many internal coaches, uncertainty as to how their line manager regards their coach role. The great majority of internal coaches' report that they experience no difficulty in being able to take time to coach (Q17, Q19, Q27, Q43). However, some are uncertain about whether their line manager believes they're being a coach is a good thing (Q21, Q42). And fewer than half of internal coaches felt that their line manager took their contribution as a coach into account when

assessing their performance (Q36). This suggests that rather than actively supporting their subordinates to be internal coaches, many line managers passively allow it to happen but take little or no interest in what their subordinate is doing. However, in spite of the lack of recognition for their coaching role, it is clear that being a coach, coaching colleagues, is important to these internal coaches (Q24, Q31, Q44, Q46).

Reflections on being an internal coach

At the end of the survey questionnaire participants were asked 'Today, what are your reflections on being an internal coach in your organisational context?' (Q47): 370 coaches provided written answers. From coaches' responses to this open question 29 codes were created which were grouped into seven themes. The result of the analysis is set out in appendix 16, and the themes and the major codes associated with each theme are briefly summarised in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2. Summary of coding analysis of responses to Q47 – Today, what are your reflections on being an internal coach in your organisational context?

Theme	Most common codes
Rewarding (n=159)	• Rewarding for the coach (n=159)
Challenging (n=109)	• Balancing act (n=36) • Insider (versus external) (n=27) • 3rd party understanding (n=16)
Recognition/valued (n=101)	• Yes, by the organisation (n=27) • Not by management (n=32) • Not by line manager (n=25)
Belief in coaching (n=100)	• For colleagues (n=51) • For the organisation (n=36)
Self-Development (n=97)	• Personal development (n=72)
Support (n=67)	• Scheme support (n=27) • Not supported by management (n=25)
Beyond the coaching room (n=40)	• Team/colleagues (n=26)

'Rewarding'

Forty-three per cent of participants highlighted that being an internal coach was 'Rewarding'. Coaching was frequently described as highly-, very- or extremely- fulfilling, rewarding, worthwhile or gratifying. It gave the coaches pleasure, enjoyment, or a sense of achievement, and was regarded as

time well spent. A number of coaches described coaching as something that gave them energy, and for some it was the most rewarding part of their job. Two coaches stated that having the opportunity to coach was what stopped them from changing job or even organisation (5116646053[4]; 5088477457).

'Challenging'

The second largest theme was 'Challenging' (29% of responses). Though within this theme nine codes were identified (see appendix 16), the top three codes – 'balancing act'; 'insider (versus external)'; '3rd party understanding' – represented 72% of the responses coded in this theme.

Thirty-two per cent of the responses in the theme were coded 'balancing act'. Survey participants' organisational responsibilities made finding time or making space in agendas to coach a challenge. Some coaches highlighted that no allowance was made in their day-job for their coaching activity. Coaches worked hard to protect their coaching time (5122389072), however some admitted that they have had to suspend their coaching because of work pressures, something they regretted (5120398667), whilst others acknowledged that their coaching had to be limited. Interestingly, one coach (5083525831) found that in spite of their line manager being an active coach they were put under pressure by that line manager to limit the amount of time they spent coaching.

The second code in the 'Challenging' theme was 'insider (versus external)': 25% of responses. Some internal coaches felt that they were regarded as less capable, less appropriate than external coaches. Several coaches linked this preference specifically to senior managers. For other internal coaches the challenge of being an 'insider (versus external)' was linked to having inside knowledge that impacted their coaching: being neutral was a challenge. Whilst for other coaches the coachee's knowledge of them, based upon their organisational role, made creating the environment for coaching - a safe, confidential space - a challenge.

The third largest code within the theme 'Challenging' was '3rd party understanding': 15% of responses coded. Coaches within this code expressed concern that there was a lack of understanding of what coaching was, or could do, and what coaching was not. Concern was often expressed that coaching was still seen as remedial. These concerns also seemed relevant to those coaches whose answers were coded 'misuse'. Within this code several coaches suggested that some line managers saw coaching as a way of passing the buck rather than tackling performance issues (5148232662), or as a way of the organisation demonstrating that everything that could be done had been done before an employee was "exited" (5080792736).

[4] Ten-digit numbers beginning with 5 are the unique identifier codes, generated automatically by the on-line survey tool, which identify each survey participant.

‘Recognition/valued’

The third largest theme, identified by 27% of internal coaches, was ‘Recognition/valued’. This theme was split, with 44% of responses coded as positive about being recognised or valued, but 56% negative in tone (appendix 16). The code ‘yes, by the organisation’ captured responses which emphasised that what coaching brought to the organisation was recognised and valued, that the organisation had bought into coaching and that emphasis was placed upon it as a result. Whilst coaches often spoke generally about the organisation, some were specific that they meant senior management or the leadership team. For some coaches, coaching’s importance to their organisation was demonstrated in the link to the organisation’s people development strategy.

However, whilst 26 coaches highlighted the organisational recognition their coaching received 32 highlighted the opposite, coded ‘not by management’. For this group of coaches their coaching was not valued or appreciated. This lack of recognition was linked to three factors: poor understanding by senior management of what coaching was and what it could deliver for the organisation; senior management view that external is better; and that internal coaching is “unseen” (5150935839), a hidden resource. Lack of management support was sometimes contrasted with the positive support internal coaches received from those directly involved with the provision of coaching, coded ‘Yes, by those directly involved’.

One role directly connected to internal coaches from which they experience little or no recognition was their line manager, coded ‘Not from line manager’. Coaches highlighted that their line manager’s attitude impacted their ability to coach, and that organisation support for coaching did not necessarily mean line manager support. The way in which lack of line manager interest in coaching was most often highlighted was that it played no part in the evaluation and reward of job performance. A possible explanation for coaching not forming part of a line manager’s evaluation of their subordinate could lie in the acknowledgement by a number of coaches that their line manager had little awareness of their coaching work.

‘Belief in coaching’

The fourth of the seven themes, identified by 27% of survey participants, was ‘Belief in coaching’, which comprised three codes (appendix 16). The largest of these codes, containing 51% of the responses in this theme, was ‘for colleagues’. Coaches emphasised their belief that coaching added value for colleagues: helping them find their own solutions to challenges; encouraging coachees to take personal responsibility; enable them to cope with organisational change, be more resilient and deal with issues they faced.

Responses coded ‘for the organisation’ highlighted the benefit to the organisation rather than to individual employees. Coaches saw coaching as a way of delivering improved organisational performance and greater long-term business success, for example through employee development or the management of change. Coaches emphasised that these organisational benefits, when achieved through the deployment of internal coaches, represented value for money versus the use of external resources, leading some to call for further expansion of internal coaching within their organisation.

‘Self-development’

A fifth theme highlighted by 26% of survey participants was ‘Self-development’. Within this theme four codes were identified, though the largest one, ‘personal development’, accounted for 74% of responses in the theme (appendix 16). Coaches highlighted that they benefited personally from being an internal coach. Many felt that as a result of their coaching they had grown: as a coach; as a manager or leader; as a person. Coaching had taught them valuable skills such as listening, questioning, communicating, which for some was a surprise. And a number of coaches highlighted that as a result of their coaching they had changed and had become more confident. This personal development was seen by some as reward for the effort they put into coaching. Three other, smaller codes identified - ‘understanding the organisation’, ‘build network’ and ‘self-understanding’ – captured other experiences of personal development: gaining knowledge about one’s organisation, connecting with new colleagues, and gaining insight into self.

‘Support’

The last two themes identified from responses to Q47 – ‘Support’ and ‘Beyond the coaching room’ – were smaller, being highlighted by 18% and 11% of coaches respectively (appendix 16). ‘Support’, similar to the theme ‘recognition/valued’, comprised perspectives of both coaches who felt they were supported and of those who took the opportunity to highlight that they were not. Support, for those who experienced it, came largely from their coaching scheme and fellow coaches: ‘scheme support’. Those who felt unsupported largely placed the responsibility on ‘management’. These coaches often felt that there was no clear strategy for coaching, and some highlighted that it was their own efforts that sustained coaching in their organisation rather than support from senior management.

‘Beyond the coaching room’

The final, smallest theme identified was ‘Beyond the coaching room’ (appendix 16). In the largest code within this theme - ‘team/colleagues’ – coaches highlighted that they used their coaching skills on a regular basis with their team or with colleagues. Coaching was used in performance management, conflict management, supporting colleagues through change, and to empower the team, and was seen as an important skill to have.

Summary

This chapter has described the main findings from an analysis of the data from a survey of 484 internal coaches: participants’ motivations for becoming a coach, the nature of their coaching practice, and their experiences of being a coach in their organisation. The data have shown that many internal coaches share a number of experiences

- Coaching, measured by the hours spent, is a minor part of their organisational responsibilities
- Their initial motivation to become a coach frequently related to ‘self’, and for a large minority prior experience of coaching was a driver in the decision to become a coach
- As a result of becoming a coach they have benefitted personally, developing new skills and capabilities
- As coaches they believe they add value, because their coaching supports and benefits colleagues, and their organisation
- They have the freedom and support they need to enable them to be a coach
- Coaching is intrinsically rewarding and worthwhile
- But also, the contribution they make as a coach is often not recognised when their performance is reviewed.

It would seem unsurprising therefore that coaches were almost unanimous in stating that being a coach was important to them and that they would find a way to keep coaching.

However, there were also a number of findings that suggested the picture these headlines painted might be too simplistic. For example, contra to the headline that coaches feel they have the support and freedom they need they also reported having to restrict the amount of coaching they did to avoid conflict with their day job. And a number of coaches chose to highlight that they felt they were not supported when asked to reflect on their coach role. Further, coaches’ clarity of stakeholder attitudes towards their coaching appeared to be reduced with stakeholder distance from the coaching

activity. Particularly ambiguous for a number of coaches was the attitude of their line manager. Few coaches reported that their line manager tried to block or restrict their coaching activity, but many coaches stated that their line manager took no notice of their coaching when evaluating their performance. Coaches were clear that coaching was important to them yet measured in hours coached each month coaching was only a small part of their role.

To return to the archaeological metaphor for the research strategy set out in chapter 3, the survey scan of the internal coach territory provided insight into what lay beneath the surface of the field. But the data also highlighted a number of questions and apparent contradictions in the coaches' experience that promised far richer insight into the impact of being an internal coach if investigated in greater depth. To do this 20 trenches were excavated, that is interviews were conducted with 20 internal coaches recruited from the initial survey participants. The interviews investigated the fit between individual coach's coach role and their day-job; how they experienced different stakeholders' attitudes, the support available to them and recognition of their coaching role; and what impact being a coach had on them and their motivation to continue coaching (see interview guide, Appendix 7). The findings from these interviews are set out in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Research Findings: Interviews

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings from interviews carried out with 20 internal coaches recruited from those who participated in the initial survey. Out of the survey data a number of questions had emerged

- How do coaches fit their coaching role in with their other organisational responsibilities?
- How are different stakeholder attitudes to their coaching experienced?
- What support is available to coaches?
- What recognition do they receive for their coaching?
- What effect has becoming a coach had on them?
- What motivates them to continue coaching?

The interviews sought to explore these. An interview guide (appendix 7) was constructed to help me, as researcher, maintain a focus on the topics of particular interest, but I accepted that interviews would follow where the coaches took them.

The interview data collected was subjected to thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). All interviews were successfully recorded, and these audio files were then transcribed and the transcriptions reviewed, noting thoughts triggered by the data. From this initial analysis, codes and the evidence which supported them were identified and collated. Ways in which these codes might come together into themes were then explored, potential themes being tested against the data collected and against other themes identified. These stages of the thematic analysis process are illustrated in appendices 17, 18 and 19 respectively. Ultimately, six main themes were identified from this analysis

1. Changed
2. Believer
3. The light by which I coach
4. Misunderstood or misused
5. Line manager support: an absence of barriers
6. Our kind of coach.

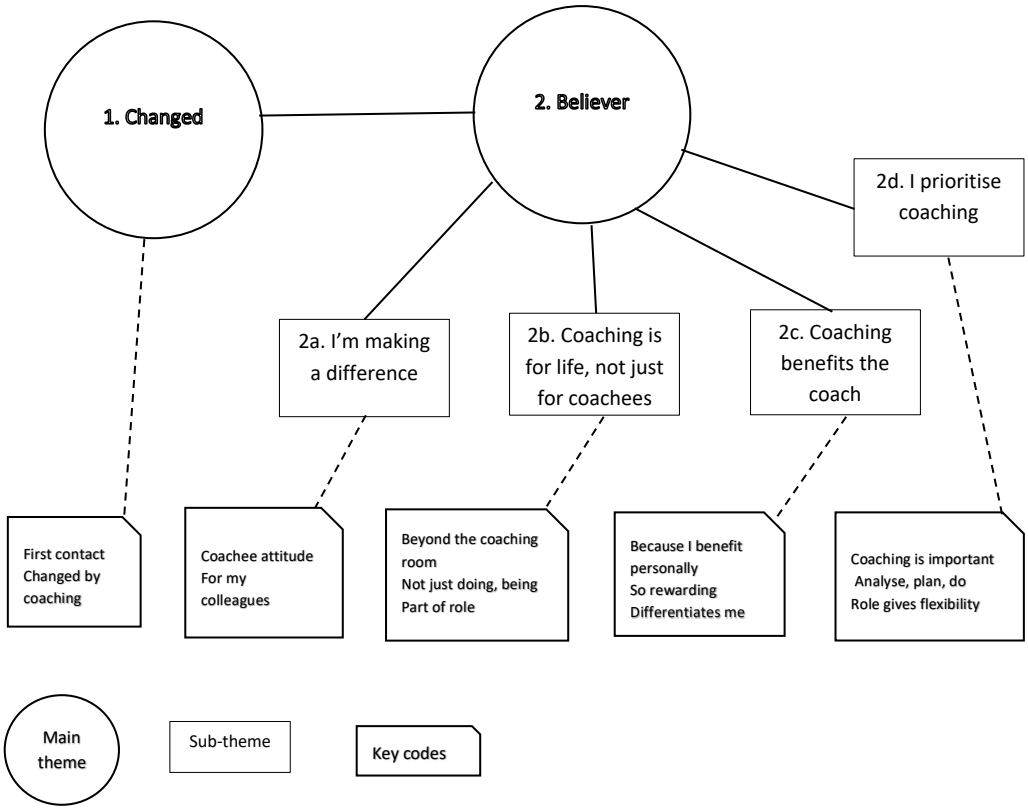
The first two themes – ‘changed’ and ‘believer’ – capture the impact of the internal coaches’ lived experiences of coaching whilst themes 3 to 6 capture their experience of the attitudes of other

stakeholders towards coaching. The way in which these themes appeared to relate to each other was mapped and is set out in Figures 5.1 and 5.2. The themes are elaborated below.

Theme 1 - Changed

The theme 'Changed' captured how, for the coaches interviewed, the experience of coaching had changed their understanding of themselves and the way they saw and interacted with others: they were changed by coaching.

Fig. 5.1 Thematic map of the impact of coaches' own experience of coaching and key codes linked to each theme.



Change was often initiated by the first contact with coaching, before the interviewee was a coach, and before they had any thoughts of becoming a coach. First contact was often the spur to the coach subsequently becoming a coach. Initial experience of coaching was as a coachee, or part of a developmental course or programme, or through discussion with someone with experience of coaching. Some coaches had been coached and had found the experience really valuable. Janet Crosier believed that her HR role entailed a degree of coaching but found that being coached led her to

recognise that in reality her focus had been upon solving peoples' problems for them. She came to recognise that coaching was a way to support people in solving their own problems: "I learned that it wasn't about necessarily going into solution mode, it was about helping them to fix their own problems." This insight led directly to her applying to become an internal coach.

Sometimes the first contact with coaching was initiated by someone else. Bill Smith's line manager suggested that he look at becoming a coach in their organisation: "her motivation was to influence me to approach things slightly differently, but she also knew it would be complementary to some of the other things I was interested in." Bill came to see his line manager as insightful; she had recognised that he had some development needs and judged that learning coaching skills would support those development needs. Others were approached to become coaches because they were recognised as having the capability to support the organisation's coaching initiative. Geoff Phillips was asked to support his CEO's initiative to introduce coaching into their organisation by training to become a coach. This initial contact with coaching "energised me" and led to him not only becoming an active coach in his organisation, but also training to become a coach supervisor.

Sometimes, the impact this first contact with coaching had was a surprise. Joy Pendle attended a one-day introductory session on coaching "because it was local […] and it was free, which sounds terrible"; her expectations were low. However, in reality, the opportunity to work in coaching triads (coach, coachee, observer) on this course changed her: "I just had a lightbulb moment, really. I just saw how powerful it was and I went with a lot of problems and came back with solutions, or a path of where to go." It was a complete surprise to her that the 'coach' was able to help her even though he was not an expert in her field. She realised that in her profession, medicine, the norm was to be mentored by a senior expert rather than coached. Julie Foster felt invisible in her department. She knew what she should do to change that, but instead "all I tended to do was beat myself up about not doing it." Her coach, without seeming to direct her, made her take action, created the expectation that Julie would have done the action they agreed upon by the next time they met. Julie was surprised and left wanting to know more about coaching: "to learn how [the coach] managed to make me do that."

For some, their first experience of coaching overcame negative preconceptions of coaching. Lynn Smith was offered a coach from her organisation's first cohort of internal coaches. However, her involvement in this new initiative was not explained clearly and she perceived coaching as remedial. As a result, she went into coaching feeling both "sceptical" and "apprehensive." Yet in reality "I found it really, really useful"; the spur to apply to become a coach in the next cohort. Janet Crosier had a similar experience, admitting that when coaching was first suggested she thought "Oh my gosh, I must have done something wrong. There is a performance issue with me"; that she "went into panic mode,

to be honest." And yet, again, the reality of her first experience of coaching led directly to her applying to be a coach.

The experience of coaching changed some coaches dramatically, as the following examples show. In order to qualify as a coach, Phil Green did a post graduate course at a local university. The impact the course had on him was profound, "a real eye opening and almost life changing, without being clichéd, programme: very intense." For Janet Crosier, coach training coincided with separating from her partner, becoming a single parent, and she took this issue into her coaching practice sessions. She was finding coping with her new situation extremely stressful and admitted that, night after night, by the time she had got her children to bed "I just want to sit down and cry." A fellow trainee coach used Transactional Analysis language to help Janet realise that "my approach to bedtime was all wrong" and they worked together to help her come up with a different approach. For Janet this experience of coaching was life changing: in my interview notes at this point I wrote the question 'life saving?' Being a coach caused Jim Rhodes' focus to shift from 'self' to 'other'. He became "less ambitious [for himself], wanting to drive the ambitions of others." His focus shifted from acquiring skills to be a better manager to using those skills in the service of others. As a result, "I feel I'm being truer to myself than trying to climb the greasy pole at any cost."

Being a coach had changed the way some coaches saw themselves and their relationships with others. Interviewees described themselves as being much more self-aware. For example, coaching allowed Elliot Davies "to be much more thoughtful in [my] own role." Other coaches felt they were better listeners, more tolerant and patient, less judgemental. Bill Smith was clear that coaching had made him more aware of himself; his motives and his reactions; that as a result, he was "more constructive and more collaborative in the way that I work with people, and I consider a wider range of viewpoints or approaches to problems," and that now he could be "critical in a more constructive way and in a less frustrated or angry way. So, it benefitted me and probably the people I work with." Other coaches also acknowledged the role coaching had played in changing the way they interacted with colleagues. Maddie Williams acknowledged that she had become much more self-aware, in spite of not being a "natural reflector": that "it's made me be more of a reflector, made me see more, made me recognise behaviours in myself and others." She was now "more aware of my impact on people." Similarly, coaching had made Lucy Moore think about "what's it like to be on the receiving end of me?"

Coaching made some coaches feel more confident. For some this was linked to their demonstrable skills and knowledge as a coach, whilst for others confidence came from the realisation that their issues and challenges were shared, not unique, helping to put them in perspective. Shirley Atkins believed strongly that as a result of being a coach she was "a more confident person." Coaching

had equipped her with skills – listening, questioning – that meant she was "more capable of doing my job." She admitted that "I'm a person who had a lot of self-doubts about my abilities"; that she sometimes experienced fear - "can I do this? Am I capable?" - but that "coaching has removed a lot of that fear." Being an internal coach achieved this, not only because it gave her skills and knowledge, but also because it visibly connected her to a process, coaching, that was valued by the organisation. For Shirley, being a coach meant she had "more confidence in my ability as a leader in the organisation; to be able to walk out of the building on a night and think, 'I handled that situation well, I did a good job'."

However, for a few the experience of becoming a coach had not changed them because they had employed a coaching style in their interactions with colleagues before being coaches. Steve Dodds made the point bluntly: "I would have to say I was born a coach. It just happens to be the approach I take all the time."

Whether 'changed' by coaching or not, the coaches interviewed acknowledged that coaching had impacted their approach to management or leadership. Coaches became less directive, more willing to engage colleagues and subordinates rather than just give an answer; to encourage colleagues to reflect and arrive at their own answer. Geoff Phillips described how, in a very challenging organisational environment, he tried to recreate the calm, quiet atmosphere of the coaching space in the workplace: he focussed upon his people, enabling them to focus upon the problem. Paul Lewis had always been people-focussed, but coaching had enabled him to achieve much greater engagement from his people. He used his coach's listening and questioning techniques to better understand what was important to each of his people, and tailor his approach to them based on that insight rather than adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. Anthony Bennett now had a greater appreciation of what people can achieve. His experience of coaching colleagues challenged the assumption that as a manager you know best. For him the majority of managers would benefit from a greater awareness of what can be achieved by their people if they were given the time and space to reflect: "ultimately it takes pressure back off the manager [and] you probably get a better solution than the manager could have invented." Coaches recognised that adopting a coaching approach to management was not always appropriate. Phil Green acknowledged this, whilst making clear that coaching was embedded in his approach to management, when he said, "sometimes it's a 'tell', if it's the right situation, but more often I try to make it a more engaging dialogue." What Phil and his fellow internal coaches were making clear was that, for them, coaching was not confined to the coaching room and their appointed coachees.

Theme 2 – Believer

When I asked Anthony Bennett[5] what it was that kept him coaching his answer was "Because it's the right thing to do." Asked to say why, he responded "It's the right way to treat people. It's the right way to get the best out of people. The business would be better if we did more of it." Theme two - 'Believer' - captured coaches' belief in the importance of coaching, and the steps they had taken as a result to incorporate coaching into their life and to prioritise coaching. Within this theme four sub-themes were identified: 'I'm making a difference' captured the coaches interviewed belief that their coaching added value for colleagues they coached; 'Coaching is for life, not just for coachees' acknowledged that coaching was not confined to formal coaching relationships, but had been incorporated into the way coaches interacted with their world; 'Coaching benefits the coach' captured coaches' recognition that being a coach was advantageous to them; and 'I prioritise coaching' captured the steps coaches took to ensure that coaching was part of their professional life.

2a. I'm making a difference

Theme 1 demonstrated how many of the interviewees said they had been changed by their experiences of coaching. As a result, they shared the belief that coaching could bring significant benefits to colleagues and the organisation because they had experienced what coaching was able to deliver. The sub-theme '!'m making a difference' captured the coaches' belief that through their coaching they were making a difference to those they coached. For example, Joy Pendle saw people as her organisation's biggest assets and believed that coaching could enhance those assets: "[Coaching is] almost like, I suppose, a bit of a religion for me." She described how in her profession there was a group who failed to make the grade to enable them to progress to the most senior level and as a result ended up on a lower career path. She had not realised how much this group were affected by their lower standing relative to their colleagues until she started coaching. Joy had experienced the impact her coaching had on some of these people: greater engagement with their department; taking active roles in meetings with their senior colleagues; making valuable contributions. Recounting the story in the interview made her "feel quite emotional about it [even] now"; that they had changed, gained such self-belief, and that she had had a hand in that change. Her coaching intervention generated a further benefit for the organisation. Historically, recruitment of people on this lower grade had been difficult because numbers were low and the quality of candidates often poor, but the organisation now found a significant increase in applications and that the calibre of some of those candidates was

[5] The names of all interviewees have been changed, but not the gender implied.

much higher. When these people were asked why they had applied they said that it was because they had heard about the coaching programme.

For most of the coaches interviewed a key reason for them coaching was that by doing so they were helping and supporting their colleagues. Anthony Bennett said: “I’m contributing to individuals and providing help or support to people.” For Jim Rhodes, being able to make a difference to someone on an individual level was what kept him coaching: “That you can help them to get through something that without your help they would have struggled to get to… to make their life better” and Bill Smith agreed, saying “I’m fundamentally interested in the positive effect I can have on other people around me.” To Gillian Black coaching had proved itself a vital support resource at a time of challenge organisationally. She said

> I just see the benefits for people who are struggling with something. I see the benefits of opportunities to discuss with an interested outside other if you like […] to help them work through their thing, whatever that might be. I just see the benefit repeated over and over again […] given what is going on for people in the organisation: fewer people, less resources, reducing and reducing […] [coaching is] another way of looking after people’s wellbeing really, which is important to me.

Phil Green also believed that his coaching helped people tackle challenges they faced and equipping them to face future challenges. But, more than this, he believed that those he worked with would then also be able to help others in their turn.

Asked why they believed their coaching made a positive difference, coaches said coachee feedback. Bill Smith experienced coachee attitudes towards him as “incredibly positive” and Phil Green said he had had good feedback from coachees coming to him with a challenge and ending up “in a completely different space.” As a result of positive coachee feedback several coaches had experienced colleagues approaching them asking to be coached. For example, Janet Crosier, Paul Lewis and Lucy Moore had all been approached to coach because of word-of-mouth recommendations from previous coachees.

John Barnes summed up his belief in the contribution that coaching could make to colleagues when at the end of the interview he took the opportunity to add, “I think everyone should have a coach at some time in their working life […] to really think about yourself for a while with someone who is going to help you […] I just think it’s really valuable.”

2b. Coaching is for life, not just for coachees

The sub-theme ‘Coaching is for life, not just for coachees’ recognised that, for the coaches interviewed, being a coach was more than just working with the coachees allocated to them by the

organisation. Coaching extended beyond the formal relationships they had as an internal coach. Elliot Davies stated that there were three aspects to his coaching: one-to-one coaching with coachees assigned to him from elsewhere in the organisation; coaching his own team; and supporting colleagues on company development programmes. Maddie Williams saw her use of coaching even more holistically. She used her coaching skills all the time, in each of her day-job roles. Coaching had also changed the way Gillian Black approached her professional life. The time she spent coaching formally understated its place in her professional life: "In terms of hours I don't do as much [coaching] as I do other things. But it is one of the most important things that I do." For Gillian, coaching had an impact on everything else she did: managing relationships; delivering training; personal development.

Many of the coaches interviewed coached their own teams. For them, management was regarded as more than just delivering objectives, they felt a responsibility to develop and grow their people. Anthony Bennett acknowledged that coaching his team was different from working with coachees nominated by the business but saw both as important. As a line manager his objectives and motives were different, but he tried to "blend some of the [coaching] skills in" in order to support his team's development. For him the two roles – internal coach and line-manager-as-coach – used the same skills and techniques and informed each other. Phil Green wanted his people to be "curious and challenging" and used coaching techniques to get them to think. As a leader, Geoff Phillips needed to drive change in his organisation but chose to adopt a coaching style rather than dictate what must happen. During our interview he shared a current example: a major process change that was about to go live but faced serious obstacles. Instead of forcing the issue he brought together the two key managers responsible: "I actually brought my two managers in and I sat down and I said 'right, let's protect an hour and let's unpick it'. Why is this? What really is driving this? What is the obstacle?" Together they identified the real issue and found a solution; for Geoff it was time well spent. Coaching supported, empowered, developed and grew the internal coaches' teams.

Coaches' use of coaching also extended beyond their own team. Some coaches were involved in supporting their organisation's broader learning and development activities, such as leadership development programmes; their role, to support individuals as they worked through the courses. Jim Rhodes described the previous day working with several young managers on a course for people who were about to take on their first line management roles, saying "I came away from that yesterday just buzzing […] helping young people find their way through an organisation."

The opportunity for coaching, the need to switch into coach mode, could arise at any time. Phil Green described how he now hears conversations in a different way – "not just listening but hearing more of what's being said and the way it's being said" – and that this 'hearing' can trigger a coaching response almost automatically. Geoff Phillips shared that he had become aware that a young

junior manager was clearly very upset about something. She was due to present a project to a group of directors and "she was really in panic mode." He admitted that as a manager he would probably have said "don't worry about it, you'll be fine," but instead switched into coach mode and offered her the opportunity to talk through her concerns. Her fear was that these senior people were "so much cleverer and better than me." Geoff helped her to realise that in reality she was the expert on this project, not them; that they would learn from her. Their conversation had a significant affect: "It was like everything just fell away from her then."

For some, coaching had also extended into family life as well. Some coaches acknowledged that coaching had helped them manage their emotions. Lynn Smith felt that with her "six-year-old child who's losing its temper" that coaching had "given me the ability to just stop and listen and be a bit calmer and just be a bit more patient," and Geoff Phillips felt that being a coach had made him calmer with his teenage children, less likely to "react" to whatever had happened. Other coaches recognised that coaching had changed the way they interacted with and communicated with their children. Maddie Williams' teenage daughter had anxiety and suffered from a lack of confidence. Coaching had given Maddie the means to engage with and help her daughter; for her, coaching was "skills for life." Joy Pendle shared that

> I was having some trouble with my daughter and I thought, if she wasn't my daughter what would I do? I thought, I'd have a coaching conversation with her. She's a bit of a Starbucks freak and I said, 'Do you fancy going for a coffee?' And she was like, 'Yes, cool'. So, we went off to Starbucks. Basically, it was about what she was going to do for her career. And I just sort of said, 'I know you've said you want to do this but I'm not feeling it. Tell me'. It just all came out and after she was like, 'Mom I'm just really glad we had that conversation because it's a relief now that I don't want to do this, and I want to do that'. And I just thought, 'Wow'.

Joy did admit though that "sometimes they do go to me, 'Mom are you doing that coaching stuff on me?'"

For the internal coaches interviewed, coaching, although part-time, was seen as an important part of their role. Coaching was not seen as a separate role, but as part of their job. Jim Rhodes saw no conflict between his coaching role and his day-job. For him coaching was productive time and therefore there was no ethical dilemma in committing some of his time to coaching. Given that Geoff Phillips described having a diary that was eighty-five per cent loaded and an in-tray stacked with problems I challenged why he made time for coaching. His response was "I understand the question, in the sense of, it is an extra thing, but I've never seen it as an extra thing. I have always actually seen it as part of my job." Lucy Moore acknowledged that five years ago she would have described her internal coach role as a separate part of what she did, but no more: "Now [coaching] is just me, it's

just what I do. It's just the way that I work." Just how important to him coaching was became clear when Jim Rhodes left his organisation for a period. He missed being a coach and wanted to pick it up again when he returned: "It is something that I enjoy doing and I often feel that it's the best two hours of that week; in terms of what contribution I can make to the business."

Coaching is not just something these internal coaches do; it is who they are. John Barnes described coaching as "one of the things I've done in my career that I'm most proud of. I think it's part of what I bring to work now." Others variously said of coaching, "for me it's a way of being, and I guess of living" (Jenny Farthing); "I think it's an integral part of me" (Julie Foster); "if I didn't have the coaching, I think I would feel like there was a bit missing" (Joy Pendle); "I can't see to be honest how I probably live without it if I'm honest" (Janet Crosier). Rupert Brookes also saw coaching as important and that therefore it was "inevitable that the level of personal emotional commitment emerges […] it almost becomes a way of life […] something that becomes part of you, and you're invested in." Being a coach is part of these people's identity. When meeting new people Julie Foster introduces herself as both a [day-job] manager and an internal coach, and Jo Jenkes is equally clear that being a coach is part of her identity: "there is an identity there, around this is who I am, this is what I am, this is what I do."

2c. Coaching benefits the coach

The Internal coaches interviewed frequently acknowledged that they got a lot out of being a coach. The theme 'Coaching benefits the coach' captured the benefits, both practical and emotional, that internal coaches accrued personally through being a coach.

Through their coaching, the internal coaches recognised that they had developed and grown. They experienced both personal development and professional development. Coaching either gave or enhanced particular skills which coaches could use in their other roles: relationship management, trust building, listening, questioning and challenging. Elliot Davies felt he had developed personally, describing himself as a more rounded character, more thoughtful and probing. As a result, he was now seen as being less prone to jump to conclusions; to be more mature. John Barnes saw his coaching as important to his professional development. He was conscious that coaching demonstrated his ability to work with people. For many coaches each coaching session was a development opportunity for them as well as for the coachee: "It's just been a conversation and [yet] I feel I've taken as much out of it as the coachee" (Julie Foster).

Coaches also gained knowledge about other parts of their organisation, and insights into the roles and perspectives of colleagues in other areas. Steve Dodds reflected that the visibility coaching allowed gave him a "very different flavour of the organisation." Coaching also gave the opportunity to

work with people new to the coaches. Jenny Farthing shared that "[coaching] has given me an opportunity to meet a wide range of people across the [organisation]": she had extended her network through her coaching activity.

Coaching had helped some coaches gain perspective on their own challenges. Several coaches acknowledged that working with coachees to overcome confidence issues had helped them deal with their own confidence issues. Julie Foster had worked with a number of coachees who wanted "to talk about their lack of confidence or their inability to stand up in front of people." She benefited from realising that other people were "fighting those same demons or coping with those same things": that she was helping them helped her – "Sometimes I come out of it and I think I've been coached as much as the coachee."

In addition to learning and development opportunities coaches acknowledged the benefit of taking time out to coach. Coaching sessions were a break from the day-job; what Maddie Williams called "me time." Coaching enriched Maddie's role and invigorated her. Similarly, Geoff Phillips found coaching liberating, it got him off the "treadmill." That coaching time was important to the coach was summed up by Jim Rhodes: "It's very often the best time I'll spend. I look forward to those coaching sessions."

As well as contributing to their development, all the coaches interviewed highlighted that they found coaching to be intrinsically rewarding. Coaching was variously described as satisfying, rewarding, gratifying or enjoyable. The source of these feelings was the coachee: seeing the impact of their coaching on the coachee; receiving feedback that their coaching had made a difference. Maddie Williams said, "To get people to succeed and start to develop and see things, it ticks that box for me on a personal level. I feel good afterwards, I can go home with a bit of a smile on my face." Joy Pendle related the story of a coachee who had brought a work-related topic into coaching, but that Joy had sensed an unacknowledged issue behind it and was able to help the coachee open up on a personal issue. She likened the change in this coachee to the effect of relieving the pain of someone who was in labour; a graphic metaphor for her sense of having made a real difference. For Joy, and others, coaching was a source of energy, it recharged their batteries. The significance of the rewards coaches got from coaching was emphasised by Bill Smith when he admitted that the day-job did "not satisfy me on the same kind of level as the coaching work does."

Coaching gave the coaches a capability that differentiated them from their colleagues. For Anthony Bennett being a coach meant "that I've got a skill set and some experiences which are beyond what the vast majority of people in business have." Both Anthony and Phil Green expressed their pride in having worked hard to achieve these differentiating skills. Jenny Farthing saw her status as an internal coach contributing to the development of a good reputation in her organisation. A sign of

reputations developing was that coaches reported being sought out to provide coach support or advice on what coaching could offer; some frequently. Reputations were felt to be built through word-of-mouth recommendations. Maddie Williams said, “I don’t advertise [my coaching], but people say, ‘I know you’ve been working with such-and-such, can you do it with me?’” As already discussed in theme 2a above, Joy Pendle’s reputation as a coach spread beyond the organisation she worked in, resulting in increased applications for advertised vacancies. However, John Barnes recognised that a reputation as a coach was connected to him rather than an organisation; that he could take the capability with him if he moved organisation: “I would still be a coach because I’m qualified and trained and got the experience. It’s another string to my bow.”

2d. I prioritise coaching

Themes 2a, 2b and 2c make clear that coaching is important, integral even to these internal coaches; a reason to keep coaching. The last sub-theme within theme 2 captured the lengths that coaches went to to ensure that they were able to continue coaching: ‘I prioritise coaching’. The coaches identified two ways in which they tried to protect their ability to coach: managing time and potentially conflicting roles and seeking support.

The interviewees said they found it difficult to make time to coach. Geoff Phillips acknowledged that “I do find it hard”; that it would be easy to cancel a coaching session because of the pressure of the day-job. But as a coach he felt a strong sense of responsibility. For Geoff, coaching was a personal choice, a personal commitment: “If you really do truly believe in it and you can see the benefits […] the individual growing in front of your eyes […] why would you not do it?” Maddie Williams regarded herself as a role model. If she kept putting off or cancelling coaching sessions, she would be sending the wrong message to colleagues: “I’m saying to you, if you’re a line manager, that it’s alright for you to do that with your staff, and it isn’t.” In order to facilitate his coaching, Bill Smith was prepared to move or cancel other activities. He had made a commitment to coaching, including to make time to maintain his practice through attending CPD sessions: “work would have to be seriously overwhelming for me not to go.” Jenny Farthing also prioritised her coaching, making the decision to defer her MBA studies to be able to continue coaching, she said: “if I had to choose between helping somebody achieve their goals or getting a piece of paper, I want to help somebody.”

Asked how they balanced their coaching and other organisational roles coaches reinforced the importance to them of their coaching. Janet Crosier was clear that she just made if happen: “I don’t think oh I haven’t got two hours today; I never think that. I probably haven’t got, sometimes, two hours to spare at all but I make the two hours.” Similarly, asked the same question, Steve Dodds said, “I think I just do […] people come first,” which for him might mean catching up on the day-job at

home in the evening. Shirley Atkins also made coaching fit within her role, because coaching was important to her. But she was also careful to make sure that her day-job was fully covered.

The coaches interviewed fitted coaching in alongside their other organisational responsibilities by analysing their available capacity, committing that capacity to coaching, and planning that coaching in alongside their other roles. Once planned, they prioritised coaching and defended the commitments made. Anthony Bennett said that he worked out "how many coachees could [I] manage? Then I commit to that," whilst Phil Green indicated that he forecast his level of activity going forward, calculated his capacity for coaching, and notified his coaching scheme manager of his availability. Balancing roles was a matter of planning and diary management. Paul Lewis balanced his roles by compartmentalising. He tried to plan coaching sessions on 'protected', office-based days when his front-line role shouldn't crash in. Once planned, coaches tried to prioritise and protect their coaching commitments: "Whatever [coaching] dates I committed to I try to honour […] it's the last thing I would move in my diary" (Anthony Bennett). Joy Pendle took the same stance: "Because coaching is important to me, I do prioritise that. If I've got a coaching session booked in with somebody and somebody else tries to book another meeting in that, unless it was something really, really important I would prioritise the coaching." If Janet Crosier had a coaching session booked and someone more senior told her to cancel it because they needed her for something else "I still would say I'm not available": coaching sessions didn't get moved.

One consequence of coaches' determination to honour coaching commitments whilst balancing coaching with their other roles was that interviewees said they did not overcommit to coaching. Lucy Moore found balancing roles challenging, but "I manage that by being very careful about how many coachees I take on." Jim Rhodes admitted that he tried not to take too much on, linking it to making sure that he didn't let anyone down. Julie Foster, on being promoted into a larger role, had reduced the number of coachees she worked with to one. This led two coaches (Janet Crosier and Anthony Bennett) to express the view that they could be a better coach if they were able to coach more often.

Coaches expressed the belief that the nature of their day-job gave them flexibility to fit in their coaching work but assumed that others might not have the same freedom. The senior level of Joy Pendle's role meant that she felt she had no one looking over her shoulder: "as long as I fulfil all the requirements of my job, I can do stuff the way I want to," and that included coaching. For Shirley Atkins, having a good team in place was what gave her the personal flexibility, the "luxury," to be able to coach. Role and seniority gave Lynn Smith the flexibility to incorporate coaching into her job. For her, these factors were more significant to her ability to coach than whether she had the support of

her line manager. Jim Rhodes also felt that it was role rather than his line manager that enabled him to manage his time and make coaching part of his work.

Additional workload commitments, perhaps as a result of a new role or supporting a project, sometimes caused coaches to temporarily reduce their coaching capacity. Janet Crosier described how her involvement in a site restructuring project which lasted over six months had led to her deciding to scale down her coaching from three coachees to one. At the time I interviewed him, Phil Green had restricted his coaching to three coachees because he was involved in a large business project. John Barnes stepped away from coaching completely for eight to ten months because of workload on a particular project, but came back to coaching because "I valued it as part of the full picture of my job […] [I had to] bow out of supervision, out of training, out of practice, but then I got back into it." Changes within the business and in her role over time meant that Lynn Smith let coaching slip: "I went through a phase where I didn't have a coachee for a period of time." However, she missed coaching and made a personal commitment – something she described as very important, and that she did not do often - to restarting her practice and always having at least one coachee going forward. The coaches who had temporarily reduced or even stopped coaching, because of work pressures, were clear that the issue was of capacity not their commitment to coaching.

A further way in which some internal coaches protected their ability to coach was to take responsibility for ensuring that they had the support they needed to maintain their practice. Some organisations provided little or no support for their coaches. Gillian Black described how, after initial coach training "we were left to it." She lobbied her organisation to provide access to support mechanisms for the internal coaches and to convince the organisation that supervision was required. Structured support for coaches was now in place as a result of her efforts. But even when support was available within their organisation, the coaches interviewed felt they should take personal responsibility for accessing that support.

When support was limited or not available some coaches used their peers to support their practice. Anthony Bennett described how the coaches in his organisation had become self-sufficient, coming together for group supervision. Lynn Smith also found support through group supervision when little else was available through her organisation. The group was a forum to come together with other coaches, share experiences and learn from each other. Being part of the group motivated Lynn and gave her energy; the trigger for her re-engaging with coaching. Belief in the benefits of coaches coming together drove Bill Smith to organise an informal forum for coaches to meet, something that was missing in his organisation. He admitted that he would be unlikely to take on such a personal commitment for a role other than coaching.

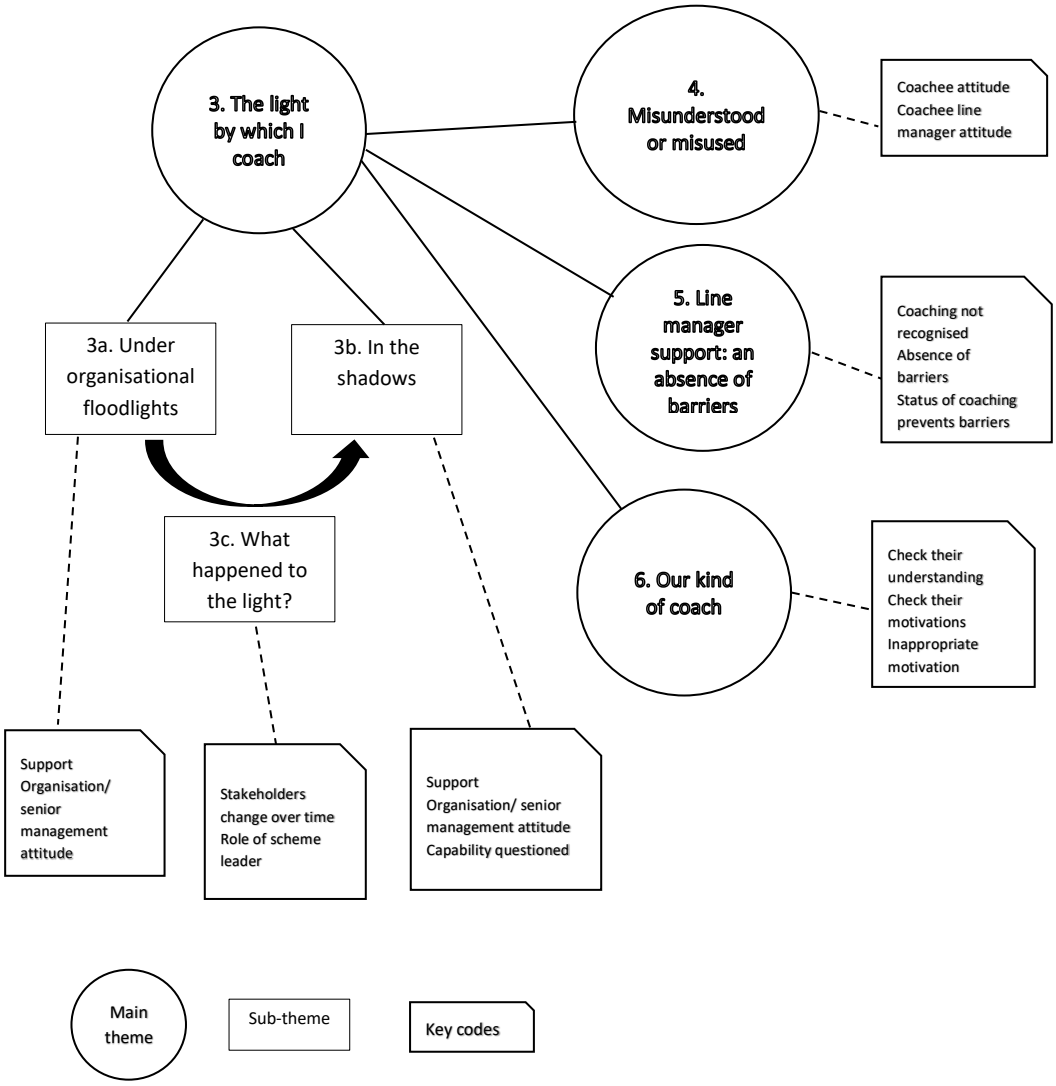
Asked about the extent of their engagement with the wider coaching industry most of the internal coaches said that they had little or no contact. However, some coaches did turn to external coaching resources to satisfy their support needs. Gillian Black engaged with an external coaching network in her region, specifically to have access to ongoing CPD opportunities and to supervision, as a way of sustaining her coaching practice. She acknowledged that her engagement with this external group had now reduced, replaced by internal support mechanisms and no longer needed. Lucy Moore had also engaged with an external coach network in the past but acknowledged that now she would only reach out to address a specific need. Two coaches addressed perceived gaps in their coaching practice by coaching outside their organisation. Rupert Brookes maintained his coaching hours by coaching clients from outside his organisation. Within his organisation there were not enough coachees coming forward to enable him to sustain his practice. Paul Lewis also coached externally, though his reason for doing so was different. Paul found that the majority of his internal coachees had the same objective: to pass the promotion board. For him, coaching externally was a way to engage with a range of different coaching challenges.

Perceived lack of support for coaches often went hand-in-hand with the perception that coaching was not promoted adequately within the coach's organisation. For these coaches this was a source of frustration and of concern, with most believing that management should do more to address the issue. However, one coach, Joy Pendle, had taken steps to address this problem in her organisation by organising a special interest group. It met quarterly and brought together interested people from across her organisation to try to raise the profile of coaching.

Theme 3 - The light by which I coach

The theme 'The light by which I coach' captured the ways in which organisation stakeholder attitudes towards coaching and towards internal coaches provided the light by which these coaches worked and by which their work was made visible to colleagues. Within this theme three sub-themes were identified: 'Coaching under organisational floodlights' highlighted how coaches experienced being a coach when coaching was embedded in and valued by the organisation; 'Coaching in the shadows' captured the experience of being a coach in an organisation where coaching was not recognised or valued; and 'What happened to the light?' captured the realisation of some coaches that their organisation's support for coaching had changed, reduced. Of the 20 interviewees, 10 appeared to be coaching under organisational floodlights whilst eight were coaching in the shadows. Two of the interviewees could not be clearly allocated to one of the groups.

Fig. 5.2 Thematic map of internal coaches' experience of stakeholder attitudes towards coaching



3a. Under organisational floodlights

The theme 'Coaching under organisational floodlights' captured the experience of those coaches working in an organisation where coaching was clearly visible and integrated into the organisation's people development strategy and activities; coaching was talked about and supported.

Coaching was recognised by the interviewees as being linked to the organisation's values and as supporting delivery of the organisation's objectives. One demonstration of this was the way that coaching was built into employee development programmes. Steve Dodds recognised that the time he spent coaching one-to-one was reducing whilst his involvement with business programmes was increasing: "The idea of integrating [coaching] into the fabric of our learning and development is much more apparent now." In some organisations coaching was increasingly part of development

programmes; internal coaches were “drafted in” (Shirley Atkins) to work with participants. Elliot Davies acknowledged that alongside his one-to-one coaching he also supported groups on his organisation’s leadership programme: “I’ve always probably got a cohort on the go.” Alongside formal programmes, coaching was promoted to specific groups in the organisation, such as new starters and those changing roles (Jo Jenkes). Steve Dodds believed that his company’s culture, which supported cross team collaboration and sharing of learnings, was an important enabler of coaching because it was recognised that supporting someone through coaching supported the business as a whole. At the same time, the use of coaching and the development of coaching behaviours was seen by Phil Green as an important element of the development of his organisation’s culture.

In organisations where the coaches interviewed worked under organisational floodlights coaching was acknowledged, talked about. Phil Green said, “we talk a lot about the value of coaching in our organisation, at all of our conferences and senior group meetings off site.” In Geoff Phillips’ organisation coaching was introduced by the leadership team as part of their efforts to change the culture of the organisation; top-down support for implementation meant that coaching was not questioned internally. Lucy Moore had a similar experience of senior management support for coaching, the result being the creation of an environment in her organisation where coaching was valued. Jo Jenkes also believed coaching was embedded in her organisation, and that, as a result, being a coach meant she was recognised as doing something which was important.

Coaches felt that because coaching was embedded in their organisation it would be difficult for someone to challenge it, or their role as coach. Elliot Davies felt that because coaching was regarded as integral to his organisation’s learning and development strategy, those holding a contra view “are probably very few and far between,” and “either keep quiet or move to roles within other organisations.” Phil Green felt that because the value of coaching was talked about in the organisation, “for someone to say, ‘that isn’t what I want to do’ would be counter to our core strategy and ethos.” Within Bill Smith’s organisation, because coaching was seen as a positive initiative, he felt it would be hard to criticise: “it would be kind of unseemly perhaps for managers to discourage or be negative about [coaching]. I think there’s a sense that it wouldn’t be quite the done thing to raise an objection.” In these organisations, to question whether coaching should happen would be to take a countercultural stance. Asked whether she was concerned that a change at the top of her organisation might mean that support for coaching was lost, Shirley Atkins felt it would be hard to stop coaching now: “it has momentum, a life of its own.” Jo Jenkes had experienced a change of CEO in her organisation but had seen no change in the organisation’s support for coaching.

Coaches coaching ‘under organisational floodlights’ felt that they were well supported. Asked what support they received, the interviewees cited lists: access to dedicated scheme leader, training,

CPD events, supervision, peer coach meetings. Phil Green described there being "absolutely tonnes of support," more than he was actually able to take up, whilst John Barnes acknowledged that "I think, really, we are very well supported for the size of team we are of coaches." The level of support meant that, once the list of support mechanisms they had access to had been reeled off, coaches had nothing more to say on the topic.

Interviewees in this group acknowledged that they were supported by their organisation but felt that organisational recognition was of the contribution of coaching to the organisation rather than of them as coaches. Phil Green did not feel that his contribution as a coach was overtly recognised - "we don't celebrate the coaches" – and Shirley Atkins expressed disappointment that, whilst the organisation promoted coaching, its coaches were not publicly recognised: "I've never seen one person nominated for an award for their contribution to the organisation […] which I think is a bit of an oversight." However, coaches felt that their coaching was recognised through their association with activities that were clearly valued by their organisation. For Elliot Davies recognition was "basking in the reflected glory" of the success of the organisation's people development activities, whilst John Barnes acknowledged that in his organisation coaching was resourced and promoted which meant that it was "something that the organisation does value."

The coaches did acknowledge that the support they received to be coaches was in itself recognition for their coaching. Rupert Brookes saw his organisation's investment in him to qualify as a coach, and the organisation's ongoing support for coaching as a form of recognition. Geoff Phillips similarly saw invitations to take part in CPD activities as a form of recognition. And for Phil Green the support made available by his organisation was proof that the importance of his coach role was recognised.

Coaching under organisational floodlights meant that coaches believed they were supporting their organisation in a meaningful way. Coaching enabled these coaches to contribute to the organisation beyond their day-job (Steve Dodds). Coaching was a way of giving something back for the organisation's investment in them to be a coach (Shirley Atkins). Elliot Davies recognised that since becoming a coach he had been drawn into supporting additional activities, beyond the leadership development programme that had been requested of him initially, but accepted this, recognising that he was helping the organisation as a whole. Phil Green also felt an obligation to respond to his organisation's needs. The previous summer his organisation had required additional coaching capacity and he had felt that the organisation's investment in him to be a coach "obliged" him to "stretch" himself to support that need.

For those coaches coaching 'under organisational floodlights' coaching was experienced as being embedded in, part of, their organisation. Coaching felt valued and supported, and their role as coach felt secure in a stable environment.

3b. In the shadows

In contrast to coaching under organisational floodlights, the eight interviewees coaching 'in the shadows' did not feel valued of supported. Coaching within their organisation felt tenuous and had no obvious connection to the organisation's strategy and objectives. Coaching, in the shadows, was sustained by individuals rather than the organisation.

If coaching was not embedded in an organisation, then it was vulnerable to being deprioritised. Janet Crosier believed attitudes to coaching were formed in two ways: bottom-up by individuals' experience of coaching, and top-down by the leadership's attitude to it. Maddie Williams acknowledged that coaching was talked about a lot in her organisation but felt that its status was fragile. She had seen how, when the organisation received criticism from an external scrutiny body, "we suddenly go from being a very coachy organisation to being a very dictatorial one." Anthony Bennett also felt that the importance placed upon coaching by stakeholders was linked to the focus perceived to be placed on coaching by the business. Anthony felt, when a new CEO to his organisation talked of how coaching could contribute to the business, be connected to the business strategy the CEO was putting in place, that it was an opportunity to more explicitly link coaching to the needs of the organisation. He believed that linking coaching to the business in this way would achieve greater recognition and support for coaching in the organisation, but the CEO moved on to other priorities, the link was not made. However, despite coaching's place in the organisation being insecure, coaches were determined to continue to coach. Although Julie Foster was unsure whether her organisation valued her work as a coach "it wasn't going to stop me coaching. I would still coach my team […] I was always going to have a [formal coaching] relationship, if I could, within [the organisation]." Maddie Williams was equally clear that "coaching in this [organisation] will live or die on the individuals like me who have taken hold of it and are driving it": coaching in the shadows was being driven bottom-up rather than top-down.

Coaching in the shadows of the organisation meant that the coach role was largely unrecognised and unsupported. Coaching was almost invisible to those not directly involved: "I think it is recognised by individuals within the organisation, but not [by] the organisation" (Jim Rhodes); "I think if I chose now not to be in any coaching relationships it would go unnoticed" (Jane Crosier). Lynn Smith acknowledged that whilst her line manager supported her being a coach, that above her manager, his line manager was not engaged: "just not interested. It does not seem to be on his radar

at all." For Anthony Bennett his coaching role was invisible to his line manager. Though he was clear that coaching had contributed to his development as a manager, he felt that his line manager would not recognise that the two things were connected. Jim Rhodes was also clear that his line manager did not value coaching, and as a result he kept his coaching activity covert to avoid the risk of being told to stop: "Being an internal coach feels like being part of the French Resistance […] it's something that goes on underground." In her day-job, Joy Pendle's organisation charged commissioners of the services she provided, for her time, whereas her coaching time was not charged. As a result, she experienced stakeholders questioning whether her coaching activity was good use of her time: "I get that all the time." Not being recognised meant that these internal coaches were not valued.

Not being valued also meant that the internal coaches' status versus external coaches was questioned. Janet Crosier believed that the capability of internal coaches relative to external coaches was questioned in her organisation. To Jim Rhodes, the worth of internal coaches was undermined by his organisation's approach: "if you are a certain level [in the organisation] then it's an external coach, if you are the level below then it's an internal coach for you." Joy Pendle angrily rejected the confidentiality rationale given within her organisation to justify the continued use of external coaches for some senior managers - "it is just ridiculous" – and gave an example of how she had managed the confidentiality issues arising from a coachee discussing with her a colleague that she knew well. Even in an organisation where coaching was recognised the status of internal coaches could still be questioned. Steve Dodds was concerned that senior leaders in his organisation saw "external professional coaches […] with their qualifications, and their certificates, and their membership of various [professional] bodies" and as a result regarded internal coaches as "the poor relation."

Those coaches coaching in the shadows of their organisation experienced little or no support for their coaching practice after initial training. Joy Pendle described how, other than her initial training which was free to her organisation and just required her to be allowed five days of study leave, she felt she had had no support. She found that even bringing together nine people for half-a-day to launch a coaching pilot was difficult: "I had to fight really hard for that. It was like calling in favours really." Janet Crosier acknowledged that her coaching scheme had given her a good foundation to be a coach but felt that ongoing support was limited. Gillian Black had a similar experience but informally took on the support role herself because coaching was important to her. Through her efforts the scheme she was part of gradually improved the support it provided to its coaches. What support was available was experienced as provided by individuals rather than by the organisation. Janet Crosier recognised that a small number of coaches acting as supervisors to their coaching colleagues were sustaining coaching in her organisation; that without them coaching would have stopped. For Lynn Smith, being able to sit down with other coaches occasionally gave her the

motivation, the energy, to keep going. Jim Rhodes acknowledged that the actions of individuals who provided support to him was, for him, recognition of his coaching. And for others too, what little support they did receive was seen as recognition of their coaching work.

Interviewees felt that recognition of the contribution they made as coaches was limited to those colleagues directly involved with coaching. Coaches felt that coachees recognised and appreciated that their coach was investing in them. For Jim Rhodes, recognition of his coaching only came from his coachees, though for him that was sufficient: “I think that is really the only place I seek recognition, truly.” Janet Crosier acknowledged that she had also received limited recognition from a coachee’s line manager, but nothing beyond that. Jim Rhodes expressed concern that this lack of recognition must put continuing coach engagement at risk. However, coaches working in the shadows were motivated to continue coaching. Julie Foster was clear that her enthusiasm for coaching came from those she worked with and was not impacted by her organisation’s attitude toward coaching. And for Janet Crosier her motivation to keep coaching was “not to do with the company at all” but was entirely because of her coachees. She admitted that if her company told her to stop coaching, she would find a way to continue; her drive to coach was independent of direction from her organisation. In the shadows of the organisation the beliefs driving coaching were those of the coaches, not of the organisation.

3c. What happened to the light?

The theme ‘What happened to the light?’ captured the impact that changes in key stakeholders – leadership team, line manager, scheme manager – could have on coaching and on the internal coaches. Janet Crosier likened coaching in an organisation to a plant, saying “it needs watering all the time.” Her point was that however solid the foundations of an organisation’s coaching scheme, sustaining coaching required ongoing support. Her concern was that coaching was no longer being nurtured in her organisation and that therefore the reputation of coaching that had been built could slip; coaching could die.

Changes in the leadership of the organisation could have a significant impact on the place of coaching in that organisation. The composition of the leadership team in Janet Crosier’s organisation had changed significantly in the previous two years. As a result, she felt that there were “a lot of new key stakeholders in the business that do not have any appreciation or understanding [of coaching]” and did not believe that people in their teams should be coaching. Her experience was that “they don’t believe” and that therefore “they’re not role models for it […] I think that’s a massive turning point for me.” The attitude of the leadership team towards coaching impacted how coaching was perceived within the organisation. Anthony Bennett saw the emphasis his line manager placed on

coaching as linked to how coaching was regarded in the organisation. Anthony's logic was that his line manager's priority was to demonstrate support for the organisation, and because emphasis was no longer being placed on coaching his line manager had no interest in coaching.

Changes in the leadership team could also result in changes in the strategy for coaching. Julie Foster experienced coaching shift from being inclusive, open to anyone in need in her organisation, to exclusive, targeted at a select few. She found herself at odds with this change in strategy. Jim Rhodes had internalised the values that had led his organisation to launch coaching, and those values were still important to him. However, following changes in the leadership, he felt that his organisation no longer chose to operate those values.

For those coaching under organisational floodlights the coaching scheme manager was often a taken-for-granted presence. However, loss of the scheme's leader could be a cause for the light by which coaches worked to go out. Janet Crosier, Julie Foster, Anthony Bennett, Jim Rhodes and Lynn Smith were all members of a coaching scheme which had lost its scheme leader 12-18 months prior to the interviews: he had not been replaced. His loss prompted Janet Crosier to reflect that he provided much more support than just access to CPD and supervision: that he acted as a sounding board; challenged her thinking; provoked action; facilitated access to external support; and gave direction. The scheme leader had also encouraged Julie Foster to take pride in her coaching, giving her the nudge needed to promote coaching within her department. His loss meant that Julie no longer knew where coaching was going in her organisation, whether other coaches were still coaching even, and had stopped promoting coaching to her colleagues – stepped back into the shadows – as a result. Following the scheme leader's departure Julie felt there was now a lack of energy to drive coaching and linked the halving of the number of coaches in the organisation over the previous 12 months to that loss of energy. Jim Rhodes also saw the input of energy as a key part of the scheme leader's role. As a part-time coach he didn't think about coaching all the time. For him the scheme leader was the source of energy that drove his coaching forward. One consequence of the change was that Jim was now seeking to engage with external development opportunities - "to keep me going, keep my interest" – to fill the gap left by the scheme leader's departure. Coaching's importance meant that he was looking to fill the energy gap created by the organisation: he was "bloody-minded about [carrying on]." To Lynn Smith the scheme leader not only provided energy to the coaches but also championed coaching in the organisation. Having a scheme leader meant that coaching was resourced, promoted and coordinated throughout the business: as a result, the business valued coaching. Coaching was now kept alive by the coaches, and the loss of their scheme leader was keenly felt.

Theme 3 captured how internal coaches experienced their organisation's attitude to coaching and to them as internal coaches. However, within this organisational perspective coaches were also impacted by the attitudes of specific stakeholders. Themes 4, 5 and 6 capture coaches' experiences of these stakeholders.

Theme 4 – Misunderstood or misused

The theme 'Misunderstood or misused' captured internal coaches' experiences of stakeholders not understanding what coaching is, and is not, and of attempts by stakeholders to use coaching for inappropriate purposes. That coaching could be misunderstood was acknowledged by Lynn Smith and Janet Crosier (discussed in Theme 1), who admitted that when offered the opportunity to work with a coach prior to becoming coaches themselves both initially assumed that they were regarded as underperforming, that coaching was a remedial intervention.

The coaches interviewed encountered a range of coachee pre-conceptions which demonstrated a lack of understanding of what the purpose of coaching was. Julie Foster demonstrated this when she said

> I think you come across a lot of different attitudes in the coachees. Some of them think 'oh my goodness I'm being sacked, I'm not performing and they're making me be coached'. Some of them think we're going to have all the answers, some of them think they're going to be promoted because of being coached.

Lucy Moore had experienced someone assuming that her approach to coaching was like that of a football coach: "telling us what we should do and shouldn't do." John Barnes spoke of a coachee who wanted him, as coach, to resolve a number of systemic problems relating to the coachee's role. John had to help the coachee understand that a coach could not do this for him, that the coachee needed to address these issues with his manager. A number of coaches described the misunderstanding of coaching in terms of stigma. For example, though improving, Phil Green felt that in his organisation coaching was still associated with solving a problem rather than the challenge of replicating success. Rupert Brookes felt that asking for coaching was perceived as "a cry for help or admitting to a weakness that they need help with," and Bill Smith said he believed that "for some of the staff, it might be seen as the admission of a deficit of some kind." For Joy Pendle the sense of stigma attached to coaching was not organisational but was linked to a professional group within her organisation. For this group, coaching was seen as questioning someone's professional standing. She recalled seriously offending a colleague when she offered to work with them on an issue they were struggling with.

Rupert Brookes believed that the perception of stigma attached to coaching was holding back its implementation in his organisation; take-up rate was half that anticipated.

Some of the coaches interviewed also experienced the line managers of coachees having inappropriate expectations of coaching; that the coach would 'fix' their problem subordinate. Julie Foster recalled being told by a line manager "You're a coach. This person is not performing, fix them." She found it difficult to explain to this manager that coaching was not about making someone behave the way their line manager wanted. Steve Dodds said that, faced with a request to fix someone, he had had an open conversation with the requester to improve their understanding of coaching. Bill Smith had been asked "can you help this person learn how to do this task? Can you come and coach them?" As a result of their experiences coaches clarified the purpose of coaching during initial contracting discussions with both coachee and the coachee's line manager. As a consequence of someone being sent by their line manager to be fixed a few coaches had experienced coachees being hostile towards them. Joy Pendle had experienced this initial hostility. She felt that at first the coachee assumed her to be an extension of the line manager, until "they realise, actually, you're on their side." Lucy Moore had had the same experience but felt that she always found a way to work together with the coachee.

Several coaches found that sometimes coachees sought access to them for inappropriate reasons. Paul Lewis was sought out by colleagues, because he was a coach, when they were going through the organisation's promotion process. He felt that some people were using coaching to "tick the personal development box"; going through the motions to achieve promotion. Maddie Williams was also sought out by promotion hopefuls: her seniority marking her out as having been successful. Similarly, Steve Dodds recognised that some people who were seeking promotion sought him out because of his day-job. Jim Rhodes' career history made him a target for colleagues with a different motivation. He found himself popular with finance people, because he had started his career in Finance but moved into general management roles. He had ended several coaching relationships because it became clear that the coachee just wanted to know how he had escaped from Finance. He felt his background "almost boxed me into a certain type of coaching problem."

Interviewees linked colleagues' misunderstandings about coaching to inadequate communication of what coaching was, what it could deliver, within their organisation. Maddie Williams did not believe that enough was being done to communicate about coaching in her organisation: "I don't think there's enough out there that people understand what coaching is." She gave the example of having offered her services as a coach to a cross functional group she was working with, but only received "someone who had loads of problems," that needed "fixing." Bill Smith also felt that awareness of his coaching scheme was low. Initially "there were big plans for coaching, a big

splash," but, over time, because of "resources and time and other institutional priorities it gets lost." Bill acknowledged that the size of his organisation made communication down through its many layers difficult. Anthony Bennett expressed frustration that his scheme had not published who the coaches were, even though the need for greater visibility had been discussed. He believed that in other fields, such as Health and Safety, people with specific skills stood out and were identifiable, but that coaches didn't have this. The coaches interviewed felt that promotion of coaching should be an organisational, coaching scheme, responsibility. Maddie Williams felt that individual coaches did their best to promote coaching in her organisation, but that "really this should be coming from the centre." Lynn Smith agreed, believing that when coaching was championed by the scheme leader coaching was higher on her organisation's agenda, more highly thought of.

Theme 5 - Line manager support: An absence of barriers

The theme 'Line manager support: an absence of barriers' captured internal coaches' experience of their line manager's attitude towards their coach role: its perceived relevance to their line manager; the impact of the organisation's attitude towards coaching on their line manager; and the nature of the support experienced to be a coach from their line manager.

The internal coaches' line managers appeared not to recognise their subordinate's coaching role as being part of their day-job. One reason given by interviewees was the lack of visibility of their coaching role to their line manager. Anthony Bennett suggested that the reason for the lack of recognition of his coach role was that his line manager never saw him coaching. Steve Dodds recognised that his coaching took place outside his line manager's team and that therefore his coaching did not directly support his line manager's goals and objectives, making it necessary to balance coaching for the organisation with contribution to his own team. Support for coaches and administration of their coaching activity was provided centrally, independent of the coaches' day-job and line manager. Perhaps as a result, some coaches reported that their coaching role had been challenged. Phil Green's line manager would not support him taking a post graduate coaching course. He had the support of the leader of the coaching scheme, and his line manager recognised that he could be a good coach, but his line manager saw no added value to his organisational role even though he was responsible for a large proportion of the organisation's staff. He was finally able to take the course when his line manager changed. Lynn Smith had experienced a line manager who she described as monitoring her activities closely. He appeared to deliberately put meetings into her diary over coaching sessions. As a result, she had to work hard to find a balance between the demands of her line manager and the needs of her coachees. However, some line managers did appear to believe that

their subordinates coaching could benefit their day-job. Steve Dodds had been encouraged to use his coaching skills within his day-job, and Phil Green believed that his current line manager saw his coaching role as helpful in the delivery of his day-job, though not essential: clearly "a secondary responsibility to delivering the performance of the [function]." Phil's coaching role, and that of several other coaches (Shirley Atkins, Elliot Davies), was seen positively in relation to their organisational leadership role, rather than because of their functional role.

Lack of recognition of interviewed coaches' coaching role meant that it was not taken into account when their performance was reviewed by their line manager. That coaching was not part of formal review processes was true for both those coaching in the shadows and those coaching under organisational floodlights. Anthony Bennett's line manager did not ask about his coaching role, and his coaching was never raised in reviews or when his objectives were set. Some coaches noted their coaching activity in formal review documents. For example, Phil Green always noted that he was a coach in the 'behaviours' section of his organisation's performance review documentation. Shirley Atkins also noted that she coached but acknowledged that her contribution as a coach was "only a very small element" of her performance review, and not part of her objectives. Elliot Davies found a different way to have his coaching acknowledged. As a senior leader in his organisation he had a formal objective to engage with the business beyond his functional role, and he used his coaching to demonstrate that he achieved this objective. In contrast, Maddie Williams admitted that her organisation did not currently have a formal performance review process at which her coaching could be acknowledged. Coaching was not even discussed when Janet Crosier's line manager discussed her performance with her, even though Janet's line manager was herself a coach in their organisation's coaching scheme.

The coaches interviewed experienced their line manager's attitude towards coaching as governed by the line manager's priorities. Bill Smith acknowledged that line manager priorities could be different to those of the coaches, even though support for coaching was agreed at an organisation level. His line manager was keen for him to be involved in coaching, but he recognised that others were not supportive of such extra-curricular activities. These different priorities were sometimes apparent even when the line manager was them self a coach. As already discussed, Janet Crosier's manager (them self a coach) ignored her coaching when reviewing her performance, and one of the interviewees, Shirley Atkins, demonstrated different attitudes towards coaching when discussing being an internal coach versus being the line manager of a potential coach. For Shirley, being a coach was important and she appeared to have organised her team, in part at least, to facilitate her coaching. However, she admitted that if one of her team was a coach she would have to question whether that team member was adequately balancing their coaching activities against the needs of

the day-job: her justification, that "at the end of the day I've got responsibilities within the organisation that I need to do a good job of."

Some interviewees believed that where line managers placed coaching in their priorities was linked to how coaching was regarded in the organisation. Anthony Bennett appeared to think deeply about what shaped line manager attitudes during the interview. He concluded that line managers want to demonstrate that they are supporting the business vision, and that as a result their attitude towards coaching depended on whether they recognised coaching as part of their organisation's vision. Similarly, Jim Rhodes felt that when internal coaches were introduced, they had been looked up to by stakeholders, seen as "special and they are going to do good things in the organisation"; that coaching was being introduced in "a proper, structured way; externally accredited." Jim felt this had given the coach role credibility, and influenced line manager attitudes, resulting in more support than might otherwise have been given. However, Anthony Bennett concluded that coaching was no longer on the agenda of his organisation, and that therefore line managers, his included, now had other priorities.

Whilst coaching was not a priority for their line managers, some coaches felt that coaching's status organisationally prevented barriers being placed in the way of their coaching role. Lucy Moore and Bill Smith both felt that their organisation's culture meant it would be difficult to criticise coaching, whilst Phil Green believed that the way the value of coaching was talked about in his organisation made it impossible for anyone to say "no," or "you shouldn't [coach]." Other coaches made it clear that they would not accept attempts by their line manager to put barriers in their way. Janet Crosier said that even if she was told to "stop [coaching] completely" she would find a way to continue: "I think I'd still carry on regardless." Lucy Moore felt strongly that the decision to coach was hers to make, nobody else, as long as she delivered what was expected of her role: she would not accept any attempt to put barriers in the way of her coaching. Maddie Williams recognised that in her organisation there were many managers who "have no understanding of coaching and may then start going 'well I don't want you doing that, I don't see that as part of your day-job, I see this' and start loading me with other stuff." For Maddie an unsupportive line manager would be a challenge, but also an opportunity "to coach someone else."

Overall, coaches interviewed characterised their line manager's attitude to their coaching role as passive, or neutral: an absence of barriers. Gillian Black had initially to convince her line manager of the benefits of coaching but felt now that "I think it's accepted that we will offer coaching." She experienced her line manager's attitude as "an absence of barriers," sufficient to allow her to get on with her coaching: "which is fine." Similarly, Maddie Williams felt that her line manager respected what she did and that therefore he "leaves me to it," whilst Rupert Brookes described line manager

support as meaning an absence of barriers which gave him the freedom to coach. For Rupert, the only proactive encouragement his line manager had provided was to support his application to become an internal coach. Julie Foster, whilst acknowledging that her view "might sound a bit harsh," felt that her desire to be a coach was "tolerated" by her manager. In contrast, Jenny Farthing's initial reaction when asked was to describe her line manager as being very supportive. However, when asked how they were supportive she modified her position to "probably fits more with an absence of barriers."

For other coaches, their coaching was never a topic of conversation with their line manager. John Barnes had neither been asked why he coached, nor had a positive comment about his coaching, and whilst Bill Smith's line manager knew he was a coach, his coaching was never discussed. Anthony Bennett described the attitude of his latest line manager as "ambivalent," saying that his coaching role "just doesn't get mentioned to be honest." He went on to say that "passive" described all his line managers, even the ones who had been coaches themselves. But he admitted that he had also been passive, never pushing the conversation about coaching with his line manager, seeing no reason to do so because he was able to manage his coaching role alongside the day-job.

Theme 6 - Our kind of coach

The theme 'Our kind of coach' captured the internal coaches' concern to ensure that someone volunteering to become an internal coach was doing so for the appropriate reasons. Asked how they would respond to a colleague who expressed the wish to become a coach, the coaches interviewed indicated that they would test their colleague's understanding of and commitment to coaching. For the interviewees coaching was a serious undertaking, something they were protective of; the right kind of coach was not just anyone.

The coaches interviewed wanted to check a volunteer coach's understanding of what coaching was and was not. Jim Rhodes said, "I think I'd probably get them to think about why they wanted to. Did they understand what coaching was, did they understand what coaching wasn't?" Phil Green also wanted to know why they were interested, where that desire come from. He would test their understanding of what was involved: balancing coaching with the day-job; the company's expectation that they would pay back the investment in them; the difficult conversations they would be involved in. Bill Smith wanted to test another aspect of a volunteer's understanding: that coaching was about encouraging people to think for themselves, find their own solutions to problems, not about "manipulating people in a particular direction."

That coaching should be about others rather than self was also expressed by other coaches. John Barnes had previously volunteered on a staff support scheme, where staff could talk in

confidence about issues such as bullying. He shared his experience of a colleague who volunteered on that scheme because they "wanted to fix people." He was concerned about the motivation of someone who wanted "to feel like a hero who'd gone in there and rescued them." For Jenny Farthing, becoming a coach meant being clear that you would be contributing to others, not just benefitting yourself: coaching is about the other person, not yourself. Lucy Moore, Bill Smith and Janet Crosier were concerned that becoming a coach should not be about it looking good on a CV. Jo Jenkes felt that personal development through acquiring coaching skills was legitimate, but that it should be in the cause of helping others.

Interviewees felt it was important that potential coaches saw coaching not as something they could add to their list of capabilities but as something they did. Phil Green was clear that coaches need to coach, not just say they are a coach, and Maddie Williams expressed the same view; coaching is not just about learning coaching skills, it is about using those skills. Steve Dodds was concerned that for some "it's a tick in the box exercise, but they've never since delivered any coaching," and Rupert Brookes too had experienced new coaches who liked the idea of being a coach but not the reality of the effort involved. Gillian Black also recognised the amount of effort coaches needed to put in, and as a result wanted to check that a volunteer had the support of their line manager to be a coach: time allowed for training and ongoing professional development, and access to the necessary resources.

The coaches regarded coaching as a serious undertaking; that they had a responsibility, both to the individuals they coached and to coaching in their organisation. Geoff Phillips remembered the "explosion of counselling in the 80's and forgive me I will be very frank with this, every Tom, Dick and Harry read a book, did an Open University course and thought they could be a counsellor": it had resulted in some "atrocious" counsellors. For Geoff, coaching came with responsibilities because "you can affect people negatively as a coach." Gillian Black also felt coaches had a responsibility for the welfare of those they worked with. Jenny Farthing agreed, saying "[coaching is] quite a serious business because you're dealing with people. Sometimes people are in quite fragile situations […] Playing at this can have pretty serious consequences. If you are just coming into it to flatter your ego… it's too important for them." Lucy Moore was also clear that "if you get it wrong you can actually do some quite serious damage." For Lucy, and others, "there is a professional obligation if you do take on coaching." Some coaches also felt a responsibility to protect coaching in their organisation. Paul Lewis recognised that for someone to say that they wanted to be coached was a big thing in his organisation: that person needed to receive a good coaching service. He had suffered a terrible coaching experience earlier in his career and recognised the damage that such an experience could do to coaching's reputation. Janet Crosier recognised that sometimes in her coaching scheme "the

wrong people have gone through training" and felt that coaching was devalued, and the credibility of the other coaches reduced as a result.

Unsurprisingly, given the responsibility the coaches interviewed felt towards those they worked with, they emphasised the need for new coaches to be committed. Gillian Black, Lucy Moore and Rupert Brookes all wanted to check that any volunteer understood, and didn't underestimate, the level of commitment involved in being a coach. For Elliot Davies, becoming a coach involved an element of "personal sacrifice." Paul Lewis also recognised that becoming a coach required a significant investment: in personal development and in dealing with people's personal issues. Julie Foster stressed the importance of commitment when she said

> I would say you have to be committed because there will be days when you think 'I can't go to this [coaching] meeting now, everything is falling apart'. You have to go. You have to be committed to go […] It has to be as important as everything else. It's not just an aside in your career, it's got to be as important.

Julie had only ever moved one coaching session. Shirley Atkins believed her organisation had a responsibility to weed out coaches who were not committed and was frustrated that scheme management were "too soft" on such people; that they were allowed to "get away with it." All the coaches interviewed were protective of coaching and concerned to try to ensure that those who would join them were 'Our kind of coach'.

Summary

This chapter has described six themes that were identified from the interviews conducted with 20 internal coaches. The coaches made clear that being a coach was important to them. As a result, they had incorporated coaching, the skills and techniques, but also the ethos of coaching, into their lives. Coaches demonstrated the importance of coaching to them in a number of ways. They prioritised their coach role by analysing the capacity they could make available and committing that capacity to coaching, then prioritising the commitment they had made over other organisational commitments. Because coaching was important coaches took steps to protect their freedom to keep coaching. They recognised the reputational risk that a poor coaching experience represented and had strong views about what should be someone's motivation to become a coach, and the level of commitment new coaches needed to make to their coaching. The attitudes of stakeholders towards coaching, and the internal coaches, determined the environment in which coaches worked. Coaches experienced different levels of organisational commitment to coaching which required them to adopt

different strategies to maintain their coaching practice, but their goal was always the same: to continue to coach. The coaches I interviewed could not be described as passive about their coaching. They were coaching converts, advocates, and activists, sometimes even resistance fighters. In the next chapter these research findings will be discussed in relation to the existing literature on internal coaches.

Chapter 6

Discussion: Impact of the experience of being an internal coach

Introduction

The previous two chapters have set out the key findings from the research study. In this chapter those findings are interpreted and discussed in light of the literature reviewed in chapter 2.

The literature review established the importance of coaching in organisations, and the significant role internal coaches play in the delivery of that coaching. However, it was also clear that, whilst there has been significant advice offered to organisations about how to set up and manage an internal coaching scheme (Hawkins, 2012; St John-Brooks, 2014; Rock and Donde, 2008a; 2008b), there has been almost no research carried out on how internal coaches experience their coaching role, or on the impact that the experience of being a coach has upon them. This gap was the driving force behind my research. The aim of this chapter is to identify how the findings from this study contribute to and extend the current, limited understanding of the internal coach experience, and to discuss the impact these experiences have on the coaches: what they do as a result.

In chapter 5 six themes and seven sub-themes were identified which related to the internal coaches' personal experiences of being a coach or to their experiences of stakeholders' attitudes to coaching and the resultant coaching environment (table 6.1).

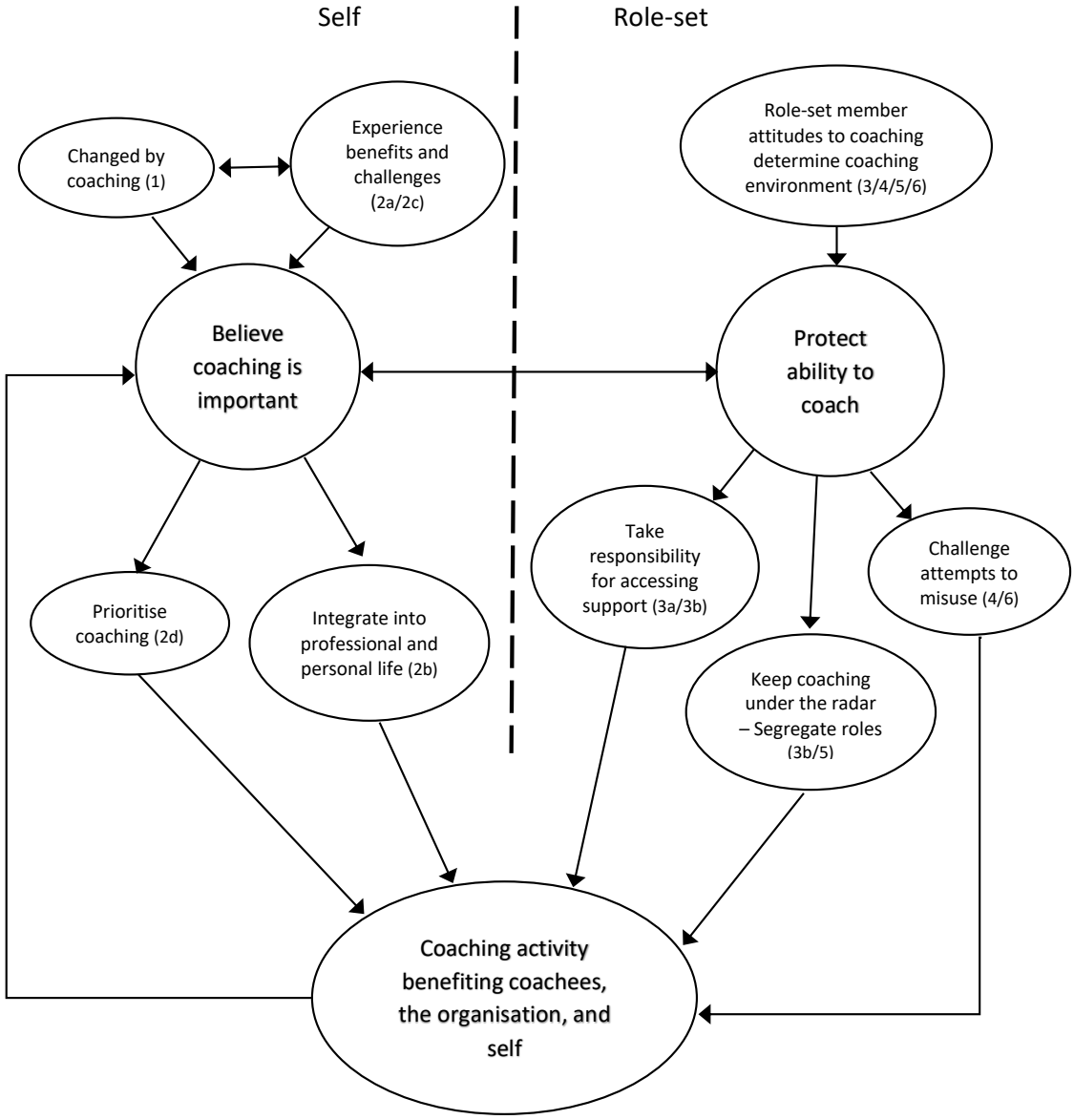
Table 6.1 Summary of themes and sub-themes identified

Theme	**Experience theme related to**
1 – Changed	Personal experiences of being a coach
2 – Believer 2a – I'm making a difference 2b – Coaching is for life, not just for coachees 2c – Coaching benefits the coach 2d – I prioritise coaching	
3 – The light by which I coach 3a – Under organisational floodlights 3b – In the shadows 3c – What happened to the light?	Stakeholder attitudes to coaching
4 – Misunderstood or misused	
5 – Line manager support: An absence of barriers	
6 – Our kind of coach	

In this chapter the impact of these experiences on the coaches is set out in a conceptual map (Fig. 6.1) and discussed. (Note that the theme or themes which relate to each element of the map are identified

in brackets.) First, the chapter discusses how the internal coach's lived experience of being a coach results in the belief that coaching is important, and leads them to take steps to incorporate coaching more widely into their lives. The second section discusses how coaches experience key stakeholders in the coaching role - the coach role-set - and the steps they take to protect their ability to keep coaching in light of the stakeholder attitudes they experience. Third, the view is proposed that the internal coach role is different, viewed from the outside to the way it is experienced by those on the inside. Finally, the study's contribution to knowledge is summarised before being discussed more fully in the next chapter.

Fig. 6.1 Conceptual map of the impact of the experience of being an internal coach



Internal coaches believe that coaching is important

In this section the view is put forward that internal coach's lived experience of being a coach leads them to believe that coaching is important, impacting the place coaching is assigned in their lives. Initially, the ways in which coaching others changed the coaches, and the benefits and challenges they experienced in being a coach are discussed. Then the section discusses the impact of their experience on the position the coach role was assigned relative to their other organisational responsibilities, and the coaches' decision to integrate coaching into their wider professional and personal lives is discussed.

Changed by coaching

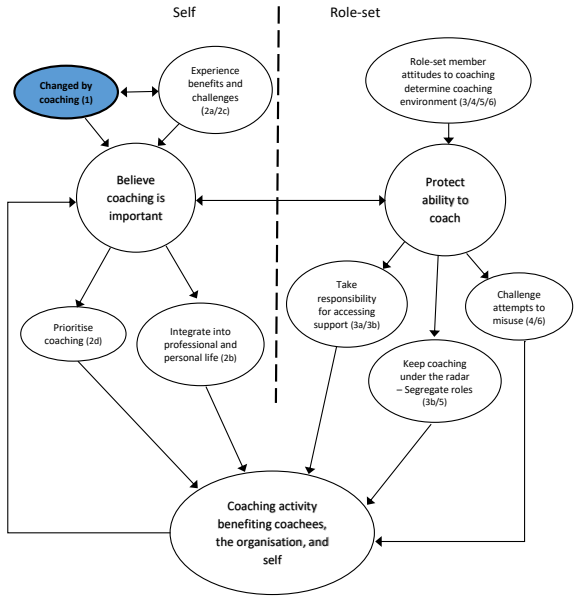


Fig. 6.1a Changed by coaching

All the coaches interviewed were asked whether they felt that being a coach had changed them, and with three exceptions the coaches said that it had (Fig. 6.1a). Those who believed coaching had not changed them felt that this was because they had always behaved like coaches: there was nothing to change.

Mukherjee (2012) found that as a result of coaching others some of the subjects in his study had changed their management behaviour; become less directive. In the current study a number of the coaches interviewed talked about how their leadership style had changed, becoming less directive, as a result of their coaching (for example, Anthony Bennett, Paul Lewis, Geoff Phillips). For some, such as Anthony Bennett, coaching was the solution to their perceived need to address flaws in their leadership style. In adopting a less directive leadership style coaches appeared to not only change the

way in which they engaged with their people – asking questions rather than giving answers – as Mukherjee (2012) had found, but also to change the environment within which their people worked: generating the time and space to let their people think. For example, Geoff Phillips acknowledged that he now tried to recreate for his team the safe space in which to reflect that he created for his coachees. This change of approach also extended beyond the work environment for some coaches. They recognised that the way they interacted with their families, particularly their children, had also changed. Rock and Donde (2008a) suggested that a selling point for becoming an internal coach was that it would help executives in "dealing with their own children" (p. 15), though the basis for this assertion is not made clear. In the study coaches identified two changes in relation to their children. For some, coaching had made them more patient with their children, less likely to react, or overreact, whilst others acknowledged that coaching had equipped them to be able to help their children make decisions.

Feehily (2018) identified a second change as a result of being a coach: the shift from self-focussed to altruistic, or other-focussed. However, Feehily (2018 p. 78) stated that the four coaches she interviewed "all demonstrated a pre-existing concern for others in their working lives" which might call into question to what extent coaching caused a shift from self-focussed to other-focussed, or whether coaching was just the vehicle which allowed them to express their otherness. Indeed, for a number of the coaches interviewed in the current study, becoming a coach was a way to deliver on their altruistic motives. That said, the study found that the most frequently expressed motivations for becoming an internal coach related to 'self', whilst the most frequently expressed experience of being a coach, and indeed reason for remaining a coach, appeared to be altruistic in nature, the reward gained from helping and supporting others, as Feehily (2018) suggested. This change from 'self' to 'other' was clearly articulated during the interviews by Jim Rhodes. He admitted that he had wanted to become a coach because he thought it would give him skills that he needed to be a more effective leader, but that his experience of being a coach had changed his focus and priorities onto those he worked with as a coach. Feehily (2018) suggested that the shift to being more altruistic was enabled by the nurturing environment within which the coaches worked. However, Jim Rhodes, and some of the other coaches interviewed, could not be described as working in such an environment. Jim's change from being focussed on his needs to be focussed on the needs of those he coached happened in spite of the environment – coaching in the shadows – not because of it.

The conclusion drawn by Feehily (2018) and Mukherjee (2012) seems to be that it was the experience of being a coach which caused the changes in the coaches that they described. But the current study suggests that for some, the trigger for change took place prior to becoming a coach. A similar motivation, prior experience, has been identified for becoming a mentor (Allen, 2007; Allen,

Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Allen et al, 1997; Bozionelos, 2004; Ragins and Scandura, 1999), though not previously as a motivation to become an internal coach. In the initial survey conducted for this study 24% of participants said that prior experience of coaching was why they had become an internal coach. Survey participants who had been coached found the experience very beneficial and said that it was this experience which had motivated them to become coaches themselves. Similarly, Allen (2007) found that the experience of being mentored meant that potential mentors understood the benefits of mentoring and were more likely to mentor others as a result. In the survey some coaches also reported that the experience of being coached had left them wanting to enable others to benefit as they had, which again had also been found to be a motivating factor with mentors (Allen, 2007). Indeed, Bozionelos (2004) suggested that enabling someone to have a mentor was a way to develop future mentors, and the evidence of this study suggests that the same would be true of internal coaches.

During the interviews several coaches also shared that their 'moment of realisation' about coaching came before they were coaches themselves. The trigger for all these lightbulb moments appeared to be practical experience. Whilst being mentored has been found to motivate mentees to become mentors themselves (Allen, 2007; Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Allen et al, 1997; Bozionelos, 2004; Ragins and Scandura, 1999), and for some coaches their experience of being coached was the trigger to them deciding to become a coach, for some of the coaches interviewed the experience was more fleeting, attending a coaching taster event for example (Joy Pendle), but was still sufficient to trigger the decision to become a coach.

Though previous studies had identified that coaching changed coaches (Feehily, 2012; Mukherjee, 2012) the current study has identified the magnitude of the change experienced. The language coaches used to describe this change created the impression of a profound experience, perhaps of conversion: "eye-opening" (Phil Green, Maddie Williams), "life-changing" (Janet Crosier, Phil Green). Coaching was therefore described as being "the right thing to do" (Anthony Bennett), "a bit of a religion" (Joy Pendle), as giving "a higher purpose" (Lyn Smith), "what I want to do for the rest of my life" (Jo Jenkes). These coaches clearly believe that coaching is important.

Internal coaches experience benefits and challenges

The coaches in the study experienced benefits and challenges to their coaching which also contributed to their belief that coaching is important (Fig. 6.1b).

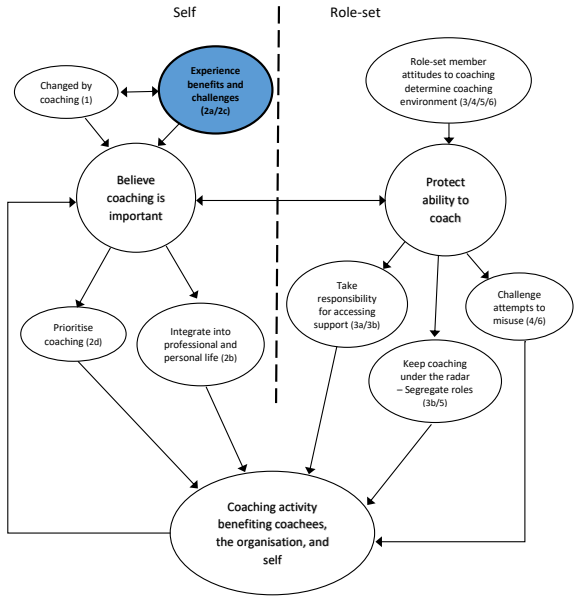


Fig. 6.1b Experience benefits and challenges

Whilst a range of benefits and challenges resulting from being an internal coach have been advocated (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Rock and Donde, 2008a; St John-Brooks, 2014; 2010), prior to the current research only a few small-scale studies have been carried out to investigate what benefits and challenges internal coaches experience: Feehily (2018) interviewed 4 coaches; Mukherjee (2012) studied 19 coaches; Leonard-Cross (2010) surveyed 52 coaches, though the focus of the survey was the coachee experience; St John-Brooks (2010) surveyed 123 coaches.

Similarly, motives for becoming an internal coach are seldom identified in the coaching literature. A study of coaching in 20 organisations by Knights and Poppleton (2008) found two motives to become an internal coach - access to training and development and interest in developing others - and Feehily (2018) reported that the four coaches she interviewed were motivated to coach in order to address dissatisfactions in their professional lives. Research on a parallel group, mentors, has identified 'self-focussed' and 'other-focussed' as factors influencing the intention to mentor (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997).

The current study identified that internal coaches experience a range of benefits as a result of their coaching, extending the current, limited knowledge base, and it questioned some of the current assumptions about the challenges internal coaches face as coaches. This section discusses the internal coaches lived experience of

- Acquiring skills and gaining in confidence
- Coaching's intrinsic rewards
- Being supported, or not supported
- Becoming more self-aware

- Challenges in being a coach.

Acquiring skills; gaining confidence

Asked during the survey for the current study whether being a coach had given them new business skills (Q20, n=426) or improved their performance of the day-job (Q18, n=427) most coaches felt that it had (94% and 86% respectively agreed). St John-Brooks (2014) has suggested that internal coaches benefit from acquiring new skills, and in a small study (n=52) Leonard-Cross (2010) found that 98% of the internal coaches surveyed felt that coaching had given them skills that would be useful in the future, and 94% felt that it had increased their problem-solving capability. Asked in the current survey whether being a coach had given them skills to improve their working relationships (Q37, n=431), coaches were even more emphatic, 99% agreeing that it had (one participant disagreed and four were not sure). In contrast, a previous study by Mukherjee (2012) found that only 60% of the internal coaches who took part (n=19) felt that their interpersonal skills had improved as a result of acting as coaches, though Feehily (2018) found that all coaches in her study (n=4) felt better equipped to work with emotions because of their coaching. During interviews in the current study the coaches reported a range of interpersonal skills that coaching had either given them or had enhanced: relationship management, trust building, listening, questioning and challenging. The coaches acknowledged that they had benefitted personally as a result of their coaching and had grown, professionally and personally. Some of the coaches regarded each coaching session as an opportunity for personal development.

St John-Brooks (2014) suggested that working with coachees from different areas of the organisation was both a source of organisational learning for coaches and an opportunity to expand the coach's network, though this was not reported by research studies which looked at the internal coach experience (Feehily, 2018; Leonard-Cross, 2010; Mukherjee, 2012). However, in the current study, several of the coaches interviewed did say that their coaching was an opportunity to connect with people who were new to them, and that through their coachees they gained a better understanding of how other areas of the organisation worked. A few of the coaches also acknowledged that these contacts had enabled them to extend their network. Research on the relationships mentors form with mentees found that mentees can additionally be a source of information for their mentors (Mullen and Noe, 1999; Newby and Heide, 1992), and provide their mentor with practical and emotional support (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Kram, 1985; Newby and Heide, 1992), but none of the coaches interviewed in the current study indicated that their coachee relationships performed either of these functions.

Beyond being a source of support, research on the benefits of being a mentor also found that mentoring could increase the mentor's influence within their organisation and could help the mentor's career (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Bozionelos, 2004; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002; Kram, 1985; Ragins and Kram, 2007). In the current study however, whilst internal coaches felt overwhelmingly that they had developed and grown there was far less unanimity about whether coaching had benefited their career (Q23, n=428): 68% thought so, 15% not, and 17% were not sure. During interviews it became apparent that whilst some coaches believed that coaching was valued by their organisation, their experience was that recognition was of coaching rather than the coaches. In contrast to the research findings on the benefits of being a mentor none of the coaches interviewed in the study made a connection between their coaching and the progression of their career, beyond their personal development, as a result of being a coach.

A quarter of the coaches in Mukherjee's study (2012) reported being more confident as a result of their coaching. St John-Brooks (2014) suggested that being able to compare themselves with their coachees helped coaches to recognise that others had the same challenges. In the current study several coaches did acknowledge that seeing others "fighting those same demons" (Julie Foster), and helping others address their confidence issues, had helped the coaches deal with their own confidence problems supporting St John-Brooks (2014) suggestion. However, in the study this was not the only means by which some coaches gained confidence. Sometimes the solutions that coachees found during coaching sessions were helpful for the coach as well. But, in addition, some coaches derived confidence from the skills and knowledge they could demonstrate as a coach. For Shirley Atkins, for example, coaching had removed much of her capability anxiety. She was now armed with the skills of the coach and felt better equipped to do her job in the organisation. In addition, being a coach connected Shirley to something that was valued by her organisation - its coaching scheme – and this was also a source of confidence.

Intrinsically rewarding

If the opportunity for personal development drew most of the participants in this study into coaching, then the reward they gained from seeing their coachees develop was what kept most of them coaching. St John-Brooks (2014) suggested that internal coaches get satisfaction from working with coachees, seeing them grow and develop, and research on mentors and other volunteer roles has highlighted that intrinsic satisfaction is also experienced by these groups (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Cappellari and Turati, 2004; Giles, 1977; Kram, 1985; Phillips and Phillips, 2010). But the evidence from research on the internal coach experience is surprisingly limited. Feehily (2018) reported that the 4 coaches in her study all experienced intrinsic satisfaction because of their

coaching, but in contrast Mukherjee (2012) found that only 13% of the coaches in his study (n=19) reported a feeling of intrinsic satisfaction from their coaching. However, in the current study 98% of the internal coaches who completed the survey indicated that they found coaching very fulfilling (Q44, n=429), and the proportion of respondents stating 'strongly agree' (63%) generated the strongest response to any of the 36 statements in the questionnaire. Asked, at the end of the survey to reflect on being a coach (Q47, n=370), the largest code identified was 'rewarding' (43% of participants).

Asked during the study why they believed they were making a difference, coaches said "coachee feedback." For most coaches, being able to help and support their colleagues was the reason they coached. The strength of coach's belief that their work was valued by those they coached was demonstrated by the language they used: highly-, very- or extremely fulfilling, rewarding, gratifying or worthwhile. During interviews several coaches shared stories that illustrated the impact on them of their work with coachees. Most graphically, Joy Pendle likened helping a colleague make a breakthrough on a challenging personal issue to the satisfaction on being able to relieve the pain of a woman in labour. When sharing these stories coaches' moods brightened visibly, the same reaction that Feehily (2018) had observed in her four interviewees: the coaches in both studies demonstrated that, for them, coaching was a source of pleasure.

The satisfaction coaches in the study experienced was a source of energy, recharged their batteries, and was sometimes described as the best part of their job. Bill Smith made this clear when he admitted that coaching satisfied him in a way that his day-job did not. Feehily (2018) also found that coaching was experienced as nurturing and stimulating, me-time for the coach, and in the current study it was apparent that coaches benefited from the time out they took from their day-job to coach. For Maddie Williams, as for Feehily's coaches (2018), coaching was "me-time," which both enriched and reinvigorated her. Moreno-Jimenez and Villodres (2010) found that intrinsic motivations reduce volunteer burnout, or propensity to quit the role, and the determination coaches expressed to find a way to continue their coaching (Q31, n=427) - 97% agreed, none disagreed – suggests that the intrinsic reward internal coaches experience, the energy they take from it, is a key factor in them continuing to coach.

Supported, or not

In the study, internal coaches' views of how their coaching fitted into the bigger picture of coaching in their organisation, expressed in terms of support for them and for coaching, sometimes appeared contradictory. The majority of coaches surveyed said that they could access CPD activities and supervision, and yet, asked for their reflections of being an internal coach almost as many chose to highlight that they felt unsupported as chose to highlight that they felt they were supported.

Coaches almost unanimously agreed that their coachees valued what they did, but there was less agreement about whether their coaching was valued by colleagues more widely. And more felt that their coaching work was not recognised by their manager than felt that it was.

Elsewhere, the importance of support, both practical activities and recognition of contribution, if coaching in an organisation is to be sustained has been emphasised (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Hawkins, 2012). Specifically in relation to internal coaches, Feehily (2018) concluded that the shift from self-focussed to other-focussed, or becoming more altruistic, that she identified in the coaches she interviewed was enabled by the nurturing, supportive environment in which their coaching took place: being part of an elite group. St John-Brooks (2014) also suggested that the feeling of "being part of something bigger" (p. 22), a community doing important work valued by the organisation, is a key benefit for internal coaches. But the picture that emerged from the survey in the current study suggested that the conditions emphasised in the coaching literature as being important if coaching is to thrive were not always the conditions that survey participants experienced. And subsequent interviews with 20 internal coaches reinforced this view.

During the interviews it emerged that the coaches appeared to experience one of two environments – 'coaching under organisational floodlights' or 'coaching in the shadows' – which could explain some of the seeming contradictions emerging from the survey. As highlighted in chapter 5, those coaching under organisational floodlights felt that their coaching was purposefully linked to the needs of the organisation, that they were supporting their organisation, and that they were well supported in return. Coaching was talked about, acknowledged in the organisation, though recognition was of coaching rather than of the coaches. This environment would seem to fit with the nurturing environment described by Feehily (2018), and the requirements for coaching to thrive identified by Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005), Hawkins (2012) and Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016). In contrast, coaching in the shadows meant that there was no tangible link between the coaches' activities and the priorities of the organisation. Coaches worked largely unrecognised and unsupported. Recognition was restricted to those they worked with, the coachees. Perhaps as a result, the coaches working in the shadows coached for their coachees, not for the organisation. Yet, in spite of the unsupportive environment, coaches working in the shadows made clear their intention to keep coaching: continuing to support their colleagues as a coach was important to them. These findings call into question the necessity of a supportive, nurturing environment if internal coaches are to act altruistically towards their coachees as Feehily (2018) has suggested. For the coaches interviewed, working in the shadows meant that their key focus was to help the coachees they worked with.

Self-awareness

During the interviews with internal coaches, it became clear that several of them felt they had become more aware of self. Previous studies found that some coaches became more aware of what was important for them: Mukherjee (2012) found that 33% of participants had realised the need to address work-life balance issues as a result of becoming coaches, whilst Leonard-Cross (2010) found that 87% of participants felt clearer about personal goals. Feehily (2018) has suggested that coaching enables coaches to address deficiencies in their professional lives, though it appears that for the coaches she studied coaching was a solution to a problem they had already identified rather than the means by which they became aware of the problem. In the current study, as a result of being more self-aware coaches described themselves as becoming more patient, tolerant, less quick to judge. Bill Smith believed he had become more conscious of his own motives and reactions and felt that he was more considered and constructive as a result. Similarly, Elliot Davies felt that he had become much more thoughtful, not just when coaching, but as a manager. These findings support those of previous researchers (Feehily, 2018; Leonard-Cross, 2010; Mukherjee, 2012) that coaching increases coaches' self-awareness, and adds to the understanding of how coaches change as a result of being more self-aware.

In the study a second impact relating to self-awareness was found, which appears not to have emerged from previous studies: awareness of impact on others. Maddie Williams admitted during her interview that she was not naturally reflective but felt that being a coach had made her more reflective. One result of this she believed was that she had become much more aware of her own behaviours and of the impact that she had on other people. Lucy Moore also expressed this change clearly when she acknowledged that being a coach had made her think about "what's it like to be in the receiving end of me?"

To summarise, the participants in the study experienced the work they did as coaches to be personally beneficial and highly rewarding. These findings add substantially to the previously limited evidence of the benefits of coaching to internal coaches. The coaches in the study made it clear that their coaching gave them a range of new skills, and a greater understanding of colleagues, their organisation and of themselves. Coaching was experienced as rewarding and energising, and gave the coaches greater confidence, both as coaches but also towards their other organisational responsibilities. However, contrary to previous findings (Feehily, 2018), this personal development was not necessarily contingent on coaching within a highly supportive environment. These benefits were described by coaches coaching within a supportive environment, coaching under organisational floodlights, but were also experienced by those coaching in the shadows, unsupported as coaches by

their organisation. Rather, the reward and benefit coaches experienced appeared to be driven by their lived experience of coaching.

The study has also shown that the roles of internal coach and mentor experience similar benefits relating to personal development and intrinsic reward. But it has also highlighted that these two roles differ in terms of some extrinsic benefits – information, support, influence – that mentors are reported to receive through their mentees.

In addition to the benefits of being a coach, the coaching literature has highlighted the challenges that internal coaches face, largely as a result of being an organisational insider. However, it is unclear how significant these challenges are experienced to be by internal coaches themselves.

Challenges experienced

In one of the earliest papers published on internal coaches Frisch (2001) identified being an insider as a key challenge facing internal coaches, and this view remains a dominant discourse within the coaching literature. It is argued that being an insider exposes the internal coach to organisational politics, which they are less equipped to deal with than an external coach (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Hunt and Weintraub, 2007; Maxwell, 2011). As a result, the need for internal coach supervision has been stressed (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Maxwell, 2011), their effectiveness, versus external coaches, has been questioned (de Hann, 2008; Mihiotis and Argirou, 2016), and their exclusion from the coaching of senior executives justified (Knights and Poppleton, 2008; Ridler Report, 2001; 2013; St John-Brooks, 2014). A survey (n=123) by St John-Brooks (2010) identified 10 ethical dilemmas that internal coaches experienced. These dilemmas relate to conflicts between their coach role and their organisational responsibilities, managing confidentiality, and coachee boundary management.

However, in the current study conflict between participants' coaching role and their organisational responsibilities was only raised as a challenge in relation to time management. St John-Brooks (2010) found that the second most common dilemma internal coaches reported (n=17/123) was that the coachee's role and the coach's day-job impinged on each other. But, in the current study the coach role was defined as coaching colleagues outside the coach's chain of command, which would explain why this issue was not raised in this study and highlights the importance of defining the role that the research seeks to investigate. Interestingly, whilst Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) also state that a downside of internal coaches is the potential for conflict between their responsibilities to the coachee and to the organisation, they go on to admit that they could find no evidence to support their assertion, arguably underlining the strength of this discourse.

St John-Brooks' (2010) study also highlighted management of confidentiality as a challenge. De Haan (2008) and Mihiotis and Argirou (2016) believe that the internal coach is not truly independent, because of their position in the organisation, and that therefore confidentiality and trust issues limit their effectiveness. Hunt and Weintraub (2007) also believed that the external coach had the advantage of being trusted, something the internal coach has to work to establish. However, a small study (three coaches from one organisation) by Machin (2010) found that trust was established between the coachees and their internal coaches, and in the current study managing confidentiality and establishing trust were not issues highlighted. Some coaches acknowledged that they had experienced coachees who had been sent to them by the coachee's line manager and who therefore did not trust them initially (for example Joy Pendle and Lucy Moore), but they were always able to overcome the problem and form a productive relationship based upon trust.

Confidentiality and trust concerns are one of the main reasons given to justify the pairing of executives with external coaches rather than with internal coaches (Knights and Poppleton, 2008; Ridler Report, 2011; 2013; St John-Brooks, 2014), and several coaches acknowledged that this was the case in their organisation. But none of the coaches interviewed supported this argument, and it was angrily rejected by one coach, Joy Pendle, who thought it ridiculous that confidentiality concerns were used to justify the use of an external coach, when maintaining the confidentiality of multiple clients was at the heart of her day-job. Several coaches interviewed felt that the link their organisation made between position in the hierarchy and choice of internal or external coach questioned their value and capability versus an external coach. For these coaches, that their ability to manage and maintain client confidentiality could be questioned was a source of frustration and was rejected.

Although the challenge of being an insider is a strong discourse in the coaching literature, which emphasises that internal coaches need support and sets limits on what they can do, it is not clear whether internal coaches experience this challenge as significant. Forty-two per cent of the coaches St John-Brooks (2010) surveyed reported no ethical dilemmas, and some challenges of being an insider have been cited in spite of the authors acknowledging having no supporting evidence (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Hunt and Weintraub, 2007). Rock and Donde (2008a) acknowledged that internal coaches do face challenges relating to trust, boundary management and conflicts of interest, but regarded them as manageable. The coaches in the current study appeared not to regard the issues associated with being an insider highlighted in the coaching literature as significant, but rather as problems to be managed in the same way that they would manage issues that arose in their day-job.

Gross, Mason and McEachern (1958) proposed that faced with conflict between two roles the role holder acts to resolve the conflict by either choosing one of the roles over the other, compromise

by partly conforming to both roles, or withdraw and avoid either role. Subsequently Van de Vliert (1981) proposed that generally only one of the role options is legitimate and that therefore choice is the action most frequently taken. Poppleton and Knights (2008) found that coach attrition experienced by some organisations was believed to be linked to tension between the coach role and the coach's day-job, suggesting that faced with conflict between the two roles these coaches had chosen their day-job. But in the current study none of the coaches appeared to experience the challenges of being an internal coach alongside their other organisational responsibilities in terms of conflict – coaching was not regarded as a separate role and was as important as their other organisational roles - and therefore the decision of how to reduce the conflict did not arise.

This discussion of the benefits and challenges of being an internal coach has highlighted the importance of coaches' lived experiences of coaching on their motivation to coach their colleagues. In doing so it has challenged two key assumptions about internal coaching and internal coaches in the coaching literature: the importance of a benign coaching environment, and the 'challenge of being an insider' presumption. It was also noted that coaches' experience of being a coach had a significant impact upon them and the decisions they took about the role of coaching in their lives. The internal coaches interviewed believed strongly that coaching was important, to themselves and to those they coached, and therefore, they acted to prioritise coaching and made coaching part of their professional and personal lives.

Prioritise coaching

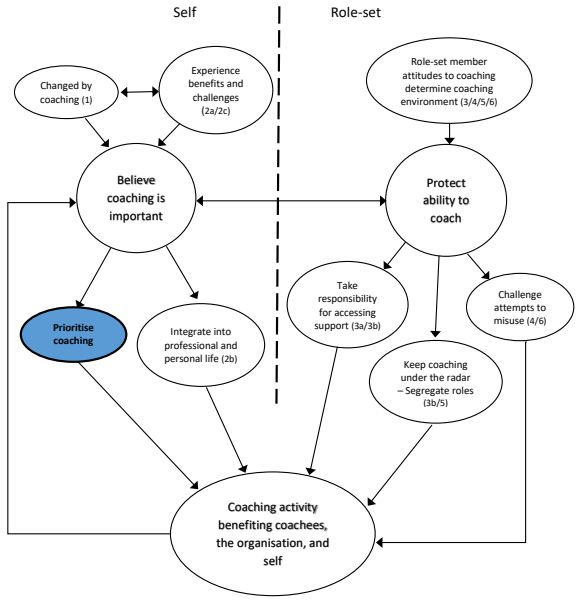


Fig. 6.1c Prioritise coaching

For the coaches in the study, becoming a part-time internal coach meant taking on an additional role alongside other, existing organisational responsibilities. However, because of their belief that coaching is important, they chose to prioritise their coaching activity (Fig. 6.1c). Goode (1960) suggested that an individual's capacity to cope with their role obligations is finite, and that if these obligations exceed the individual's capacity, then role strain, or stress, will be experienced. Role strain is associated with poor performance, reduced organisational commitment and greater propensity to quit (Biddle, 1986; Ortqvist and Wincent, 2006). St John-Brooks (2014) suggested that for internal coaches balancing their coaching role with their day-job is a key challenge. And when reflecting on being a coach in the survey (Q47: n=370), the largest code within the theme 'challenging' was 'balancing act', though this was raised by only 10% of coaches who answered the question.

However, the finite resources/role strain assumption has been challenged by Sieber (1974), Marks (1977) and Nordenmark (2004) who argued that additional roles can result in additional benefits and can generate energy, rather than just consume energy. During interviews internal coaches acknowledged that time pressure was a challenge, but they were clear that although time pressure might impact the capacity that they had available to coach it did not impact their motivation to coach. Whilst interviewees acknowledged the challenge of making time to coach, they were clear that they did make the time, because they believed that coaching was important and so they prioritised it, but also because coaching was for them a source of energy. In mentoring Newby and Heide (1992) had also found that being a mentor, whilst adding new responsibilities and challenges to the mentor's organisational responsibilities, was stimulating and role enhancing suggesting that both internal coach and mentor roles are experienced as worth the effort involved. These findings are in line with Sieber's (1974) view that additional roles could be rewarding and enriching, Marks' (1977) position that time and available energy are flexible and can be increased if there is need, and Nordenmark's (2004) finding that taking on additional social roles is beneficial to individuals. The coaches interviewed appeared to acknowledge what St John-Brooks (2014) said that balancing coaching with other organisational roles was challenging but did not attach the same significance to it that she did, because for them coaching was a priority. In addition to prioritising their coaching activity, coaches' experience caused them to extend coaching beyond the coaching room into other areas of their lives.

Integrate coaching into professional and personal life

The study found that internal coaches' lived experience of coaching led them to integrate coaching skills, behaviours and values into their wider professional and personal lives (Fig. 6.1d).

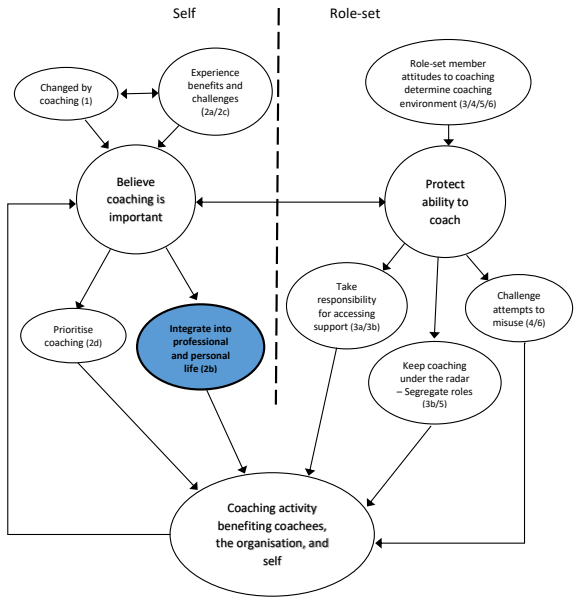


Fig. 6.1d Integrate into professional and personal life

It has been suggested that faced with managing two or more roles the most frequently adopted strategies are role segregation or role integration (Ashforth, Kreiner and Fugate, 2000; Carton and Ungureanu, 2018). Segregation implies that each role has a distinct identity and is clearly bounded. The difference between roles is clear, but in consequence moving between roles can be difficult. In contrast, integration implies significant overlap between roles, blurred boundaries and identities. Moving between roles is easier, natural even, but role confusion is a greater risk. Ashforth, Kreiner and Fugate (2000) found that the more an individual identifies with a role the more they seek to integrate that role into their other roles. Though they also found that organisational context exerted a stronger influence than individual preference. However, the determination to integrate coaching into their professional lives shown by those coaching in the shadows in the current study challenges the finding that organisational context overrides individual preference. So, what did internal coaches do to manage their multiple roles?

In the study the coaches interviewed were clear that for them coaching extended far beyond the coaching room. They described using coaching to support a range of learning and development activities within their organisation which could involve coaching individuals but might also involve supporting and working with small groups. Coaches also described using coaching in their interactions with their own teams, in their interactions with colleagues, and with their family, particularly their children. This crossover of the use of coaching skills into other aspects of internal coaches' organisational responsibilities is only implied in the practitioner literature: becoming a better manager or leader (St John-Brooks, 2014); getting more out of subordinates (Rock and Donde, 2008a). Mukherjee's (2012) finding of a shift in leadership style, and Feehily's (2018) finding that one of her

interviewees had changed the way she interacted with colleagues also suggest the use of coaching skills beyond the coaching room. However, the current study found that coaches were explicit about the extent to which they had integrated coaching into their other roles, personal as well as professional. Choosing to integrate coaching with their other roles gave coaches additional resources with which to fulfil their other organisational responsibilities, but integration was also seen as an obligation: the right thing to do (Anthony Bennett).

The current study highlighted that coaching, though formally a part-time role, which for most (79%) took up fewer than five hours per month, was very important to the coaches who took part. It had been integrated into their professional, and often their personal lives, to an extent that was not evident from previous studies. Integration was not just a strategy for coping with multiple roles, it was a choice. Coaching was seen as delivering benefit to the coachees, the organisation and the coaches. Therefore, coaching was not regarded as separate to their job in the organisation but as part of their job and was for many as important as their day-job. For these internal coaches, coaching was not just something they did; it was who they were.

Summary

For the coaches in the study coaching was very important. As a result, they appeared to internalise coaching behaviours and values, and integrate coaching into the approach they took with others, professionally and personally. For this group the benefits and rewards they experienced motivated them to maintain their coaching practice whether the environment within which they coached was supportive of them or not. The study suggests therefore that the lived experiences of the internal coaches played a more important role in motivating them to maintain their practice than did the environment. Coaches' lived experience of coaching demonstrated to them that coaching is beneficial - to themselves, their coachees and the organisation - strengthening their belief in coaching and their determination to continue to coach.

Internal coaches protect their ability to coach

The chapter so far has set out how this study has added to our knowledge of the way in which the experience of being an internal coach had changed the coaches, and how as a result they had incorporated coaching into their lives, professional and private. It has also suggested that coaches' willingness and ability to sustain their coaching might be less sensitive to the environment in which their coaching took place than had previously been proposed and instead be driven by coaches' lived

experiences of being a coach. However, this cannot be taken to suggest that their coaching took place in a vacuum. The current study identified three aspects of internal coaches' relationships with their role-set that warrant discussion: the experience of top-down support – senior management; the experience of losing key stakeholders – scheme manager; and the experience of being invisible – line manager. The attitudes of these stakeholders towards coaching that the internal coaches experienced impacted and shaped the steps coaches took to protect their ability to continue coaching.

Internal coaches' experience of the role-set

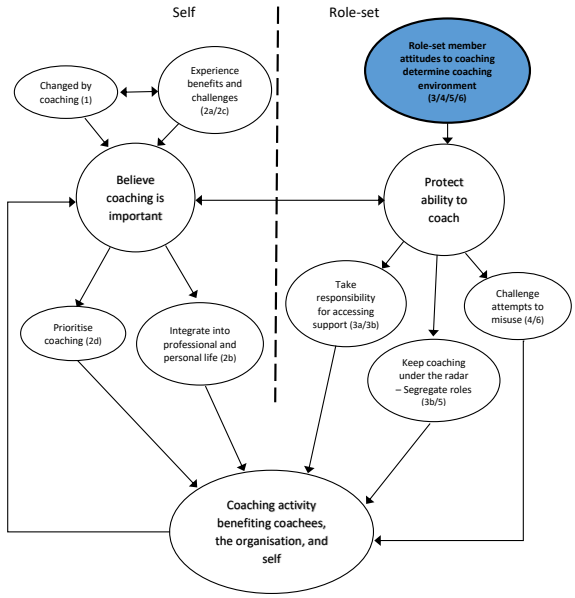


Fig. 6.1e Role-set member attitudes to coaching determine coaching environment

So far, this chapter has discussed internal coaches and their coachees, but these are not the only actors with a stake in the internal coach role. Part-time internal coaches have several roles in their organisation and as a result interact with multiple stakeholders (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Maxwell, 2011; Wilson, 2008). Each role has associated with it a group of stakeholders with which the role holder interacts: the role-set (Katz and Kahn, 1978; Mullins, 2016). Each role-set has expectations of the role holder, and therefore holding multiple roles involves dealing with multiple role-sets which might have differing, perhaps incompatible expectations. The attitudes of these role-set members towards coaching shapes the environment in which the internal coaches coach (Fig. 6.1e). Unsurprisingly therefore, Knights and Poppleton (2008) found that some organisations reported attrition amongst internal coaches and put this down to tension between the coach's coaching role and their other organisational responsibilities. From the current study key role-set members of the internal coach role appeared to include, in addition to the coachees, senior management or 'the organisation', the coaching scheme manager and the coach's line manager

Experience of top-down support: Senior management

The advice of those writing about how to introduce coaching into organisations emphasises the importance of senior management buy-in and support. Gormley and van Nieuwerburgh (2014) reviewed the literature on embedding coaching into organisations to create a coaching culture. They identified three themes common across the literature reviewed: the need for promotion of coaching across the organisation, connection of coaching to the organisation's objectives and priorities, and role-modelling of coaching behaviours by senior management. This literature emphasises that coaching is not sustainable unless what coaching can achieve is widely understood (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Rock and Donde, 2008b), the relevance of coaching to the organisation is made clear (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Clutterbuch et al, 2016; Hawkins, 2012; Wilson, 2011), and commitment to coaching is demonstrated by those in positions of influence (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; McComb, 2012b). Studies of internal coaches by Di Girolamo, Rogers and Heink (2016) and of internal supervisors by Robson (2016) both found that internal participants focussed upon ensuring that their coaching scheme had organisational support and was aligned with the organisation's goals. However, asked in the survey conducted for this study whether they felt that internal coaches were an acknowledged part of their organisation's people development strategy (Q30, n=432), only 61% of coaches felt that they were: for almost 40% of survey participants the link between internal coaches and their organisation's approach to people development was not clear. Interestingly, Mukherjee (2012) also found that only a small proportion (15%) of the coaches in his study (n=19) connected their coaching role to the organisation's people development strategy.

Of the internal coaches interviewed in the study, 50% appeared to be coaching under organisational floodlights and 40% coaching in the shadows (2 coaches could not be easily assigned to one category). The experience of those coaching under floodlights was that coaching was talked about, linked with the values the organisation wanted to espouse and built into the organisation's development programmes. As a result, coaches working under floodlights felt it would be difficult for someone to challenge their coaching, as to do so would be seen as going against the organisation. The situation described by those working under organisational floodlights appears to fit well with the requirements described to successfully embed coaching in an organisation (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Gormley and Nieuwerburgh, 2014; Hawkins, 2012; Rock and Donde, 2008b).

In contrast, for those working in the shadows coaching was not experienced as being embedded in the organisation. For them coaching appeared to be neither understood nor valued, and as a result some internal coaches had experienced that their status versus external coaches was questioned. What these coaches were describing were the circumstances under which those

advocating embedding coaching into an organisation believed that coaching would fail. The coaches interviewed did feel that their organisations should do more to market coaching, to drive understanding of the value that coaching could bring. However, in spite of this unsupportive environment the internal coaches interviewed continued to coach. This reality is not acknowledged in the coaching culture literature, perhaps because coaching in the shadows does not fit the narrative that to succeed coaching must have top-down organisational support.

Though the coaches in both groups shared the same positive attitude to coaching, the driver for coaching appeared to be different under the different conditions experienced. For those coaching under floodlights coaching was experienced as directed by the organisation, or its representative, the coaching scheme manager. Coaches supported the activities initiated by the organisation's coaching scheme, and the scheme was capable of placing obligations on the coaches: that they stretch themselves to meet demand, for example. It appeared natural for these coaches to align with the organisation. However, when coaching took place in the shadows coaching appeared to be driven by the coaches rather than the organisation. These coaches made clear that they continued to coach because of those they worked with rather than for the organisation. Coaching in the shadows required these coaches to become activists in order to live their values. Egan (1994) has suggested that covert, unacknowledged activities, what he called shadow side activities, take place in many organisations, often driven by the values and beliefs of those involved, and both Egan (1994) and Garvey (1999) have suggested that private mentoring relationships might be an example of shadow side activity. The actions taken by those coaches who were coaching in the shadows of their organisation, without senior management support or buy-in, also appeared to be an example of shadow side activity.

The study found that coaches acted in two different ways depending on the organisational circumstances. This reaction to the environment in which their coach role took place has not been previously identified in the coaching literature, perhaps because of reluctance to acknowledge that coaching takes place in unsupportive environments. Aligning with the organisation's strategy on coaching (Knights and Poppleton, 2008) and mentoring (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997) was found to positively impact the intention to continue coaching or mentoring, and the coaches working under organisational floodlights appeared to act as followers, or supporters, by aligning with and helping to deliver the coaching strategy of their organisation. In contrast, those coaching in their organisation's shadows had become activists, finding their own way to deliver coaching to those who reached out to them, in spite of the absence of senior management encouragement.

Experience of loss of key stakeholders: Scheme manager

It has been acknowledged in the coaching literature that coaching in organisations is vulnerable to changes in the role-set (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Hawkins, 2012). Several of the internal coaches interviewed in the study identified changes in key stakeholders which they felt had impacted coaching in their organisation. The extent to which role-set members engage with and support a role is dependent on the importance they attach to that role (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Several coaches interviewed had experienced new senior managers joining the organisation who were not interested in coaching. The impact of role-set changes identified by interviewees included loss of understanding of what coaching could deliver, loss of buy-in and role-modelling behaviours, and changes to coaching strategy.

Arguably the most obvious member of the internal coach role-set (apart from the coachees) is, where they are in place, the coaching scheme manager. Clutterbuck and Megginson (2005), Hawkins (2012), and Humphrey and Dean (2016) all emphasised the importance of this role in sustaining coaching in an organisation. Interestingly, when in place the scheme manager or leader was little talked about by coaches during the interviews in this study. Asked to talk about the support available to them, those coaching under organisational floodlights cited lists which typically included a dedicated scheme leader and CPD activities, supervision, peer coach get-togethers, but had nothing further to say: their needs were met.

However, whilst for those coaching under floodlights the scheme manager was often a taken-for-granted figure, his or her loss, as happened to five of the coaches interviewed, caused the light by which they coached to go out. It was only with the scheme manager's departure that these coaches realised the full extent of the support that they had provided. In addition to administering the scheme and creating access to training, CPD and supervision, as highlighted in the literature and by those interviewees coaching under floodlights, these coaches now realised that their scheme manager had also been a personal sounding board, challenged their thinking, nudged them to push themselves, and been a source of energy. Additionally, their scheme manager had been a conduit between the coaches and the organisation, keeping on the light by which they coached through his engagement of senior management. But, once again, in spite of this setback, these coaches continued to coach their colleagues.

Experience of being invisible: Line manager

St John-Brooks (2014) suggested that having a day-job and being an internal coach was challenging, and Knights and Poppleton (2008) had already found that some organisations reported tension between the two roles, which was felt to have resulted in coach attrition. Others have

acknowledged this risk and used it to call for support mechanisms such as supervision to be made available to internal coaches (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Maxwell, 2011), and to call for the coach role to be formally acknowledged in the employee's job description (Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016). Signs of this tension between coach role and other organisational responsibilities were therefore looked for during the study. The coach's line manager was expected to be a key stakeholder if tensions were evident.

The survey included a number of statements that sought to understand how the coaches experienced the attitude of their line manager towards their coaching role. A mixed picture emerged. Whilst the majority of coaches indicated that they had freedom to fit coaching around their day-job, there was less consensus about whether their line manager regarded their coach role positively, and more coaches said that their coaching was not recognised when their performance was reviewed than said that it was.

The coaching literature does not assign the line manager a role in relation to the internal coach. Whilst a study by Knights and Poppleton (2008) found that the organisations involved felt that line manager engagement was key to the successful implementation of coaching, the roles assigned to line managers were to support subordinates being coached, be an advocate for coaching in the organisation, and to role-model coaching behaviours. Similarly, the Ridler Report (2016) found that the focus of organisations with regard to line managers was to connect them into the coaching of their subordinates. Neither report found evidence of a line manager role in supporting subordinates who were internal coaches. Elsewhere, the only role assigned to the line manager of a prospective internal coach is to give permission for their subordinate to apply to become a coach (Frisch, 2001; St John-Brooks, 2014), and St John-Brooks (2014) has cautioned that even this support might be tenuous. The current study is the first that has examined how internal coaches experience their line manager's attitude towards their coaching.

In the study the internal coaches interviewed, on the whole, felt that their line managers did not recognise their coaching role to be part of their day-job. One explanation put forward by some coaches was the lack of visibility that line managers had of coaches' coaching activity. Goffman (1959) stated that for a role to be recognised, that is for the role's significance to the role holder in terms of both benefits and costs to be understood by others, the role must be visible. He suggested that lack of visibility of a role can result in it being underappreciated. Biddle (1979) agreed, suggesting that visibility of a role enables stakeholders to become familiar with it and understand it. He acknowledged that whilst many roles are visible because they are carried out in public, some roles are carried out in private and are therefore not visible to others: coaching is arguably an example of such a role. When interviewed, Anthony Bennett recognised that the reason his line manager did not acknowledge his

coaching was because he never saw Anthony coaching, and had no understanding of what the coaching role meant to Anthony. Applying the theatrical metaphor employed within role theory (Biddle, 1986) it could be argued that whilst the coach and coachee were actors in a stage production and the coach's line manager was a member of the audience, the interaction between coach and coachee did not take place on the stage but rather happened in the wings, out of sight of audience members.

Steve Dodds also recognised that his work as a coach took place away from his line manager's team, and that, as a result was not visible. He also realised that because he coached outside his team that his line manager did not directly benefit from his coaching. Katz and Kahn (1978) suggested that the extent to which a role-set member engaged with a role was dependent on the importance of the role to that stakeholder. That a line manager had little or no interaction with or benefit from their subordinate's coaching role would give little incentive to engage with it. This was demonstrated by Phil Green's line manager who refused to support his training to be a coach. He acknowledged that Phil would make a good coach but saw no added value to Phil's day-job. And whilst not all line managers were experienced as being so dismissive, it was clear that the focus of line managers was their subordinate's day-job: coaching was regarded as secondary. Perhaps unsurprisingly therefore, on the whole line managers' attitudes towards coaches were characterised by the interviewees as "ambivalent," "neutral," "passive" – "an absence of barriers." And two coaches, Shirley Atkins and Janet Crosier, demonstrated that even being a coach did not alter the line manager's attitude to the subordinate's coach role.

As a consequence of line managers having little interest in the internal coach role the contribution internal coaches made to the organisation through their coaching was not formally recognised when their performances were reviewed. Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer (2016) appear to recognise this issue when they suggest that the internal coaching role should be included in the job descriptions of volunteer coaches but do not pursue it further. Perhaps surprisingly, in the study this lack of recognition was experienced by coaches who were coaching under organisational floodlights as well as those coaching in the shadows. However, in spite of their line manager's ambivalence, these internal coaches found ways to maintain their coaching because it was important to them. What cannot be determined from the current study is whether some coaches gave up the role, faced with their line manager's indifference.

This discussion raises a question: is the internal coach's line manager a member of the internal coach role-set or not? Mullins (2016) states that a role-set member is defined by the meaningful interactions they have with the role holder in the performance of his or her role. Most of the coaches interviewed in this study experienced no interaction between themselves and their line manager with

regard to their coaching and recognised that there was little or no overlap between their coaching and the priorities of their line manager, suggesting that the line manager is not a member of the coach's role-set. The coaching literature assigns no role to the coach's line manager beyond granting permission for their subordinate to be a coach (St John-Brooks, 2014). That the line manger's role is so limited implies that they are not a member of the coach role-set, though the acknowledgement of their power to decide whether their subordinate can coach or not suggests that their status in their subordinate's day-job role-set was capable of overriding the coach role. And the disappointment frequently expressed by coaches that their coaching was not formally recognised when their performance was reviewed suggests that coaches did regard their line manager as a coach role-set member and expected them to recognise their coaching effort, but that this expectation was not being met.

Summary

Applying a role theory lens to coaching stakeholders, or role-set members, has highlighted the impact of visibility, or lack of visibility, on role-set member understanding of and interest in the internal coach role. It has shown the impact of role-set member support for coaching on the environment in which the coaches in the study coached, and how changes in role-set membership could lead to changes in that environment: that the lights could go out. Further, it has questioned whether the coach's line manager is a member of their subordinate's coach role-set and highlighted that line manager and subordinate can have different views, and therefore different expectations of each other. Whether the stakeholder attitudes experienced by internal coaches are a cause of coach attrition cannot be determined. However, whilst the coaches in this study did experience different coaching environments as a result of stakeholder attitudes to coaching, they took steps to protect their coaching role because coaching was important to them.

Internal Coaches take responsibility for the support they need

The study found that internal coaches took steps to protect their ability to coach in three main ways. One, was to take responsibility for accessing the support they needed to sustain their practice (Fig. 6.1f).

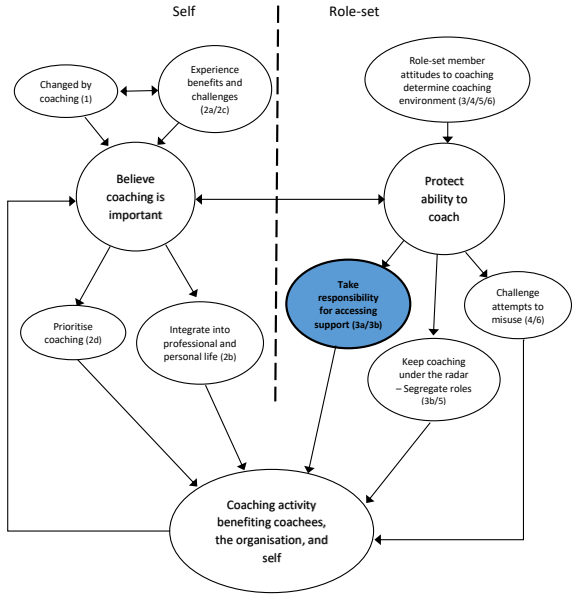


Fig. 6.1f Take responsibility for accessing support

Internal coaches are held to require ongoing access to support mechanisms: training, CPD, supervision, coaching scheme management (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012). This support is said to be required to ensure that coaching remains embedded in an organisation (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005), to facilitate ongoing development of coaches' practice (Frisch, 2005; Frost, 2007; Hunt and Weintraub, 2007; Maxwell, 2011; St John-Brooks, 2010), and to help internal coaches deal with the challenges of being an insider (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Maxwell, 2011). In the current study the survey results suggested that the majority of internal coaches felt that they had access to such support.

St John-Brooks (2014) suggested however that the level of support provided by organisations varied, from comprehensive to nothing, and the interviews carried out during this study did highlight variation: those coaching under organisational floodlights generally experiencing "absolutely tonnes of support" (Elliot Davies) whilst those coaching in the shadows were often offered little or no support. The assumption implicit in the literature is that organisations, through their coaching schemes, should provide access to support mechanisms for their internal coaches (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Hawkins, 2012; St John-Brooks, 2014). However, contrary to what was advocated by the coaching literature, what did not vary, whether working under floodlights or in the shadows, was coaches' belief that they were responsible for accessing the support they needed. Where good support was available this meant making time to attend events, meetings and supervision. Where there was no support, it meant taking action to fill the support gap.

During the interviews, those coaches for whom little or no support was made available described steps they had taken to get the support they felt they needed. St John-Brooks (2014) noted

that where a coach community had been created an element of peer coaching might take place. Bill Smith had taken responsibility to set up an informal group of peers within his organisation, something he admitted he was unlikely to have done for any other role. But in the current study the coaches went beyond this, also turning to their peers as a way of accessing supervision, and as a source of motivational energy to sustain their practice. Gillian Black, dissatisfied with the support available, had lobbied her organisation to step up and provide support. As a result, coaches in her organisation now had group supervision. When it came to be having their support needs met coaches were active rather than passive, something which has not been discussed in the coaching literature.

Something else that emerged from the interviews, which had not been highlighted previously, was how little most internal coaches engaged with the wider, external coaching industry. The exception was to access the support they felt they needed. Several coaches described how they had attended external events or engaged with external networks as a way to access CPD opportunities and/or to have supervision. Interestingly, both Gillian Black and Lucy Moore, who had accessed external sources of CPD and supervision, acknowledged that they no longer engaged with the external coaching world to the same extent because, through their own efforts, these support mechanisms were now available internally. A further reason for coaches looking externally was to supplement their internal coaching experience. Rupert Brookes coached external clients to increase the number of hours of coaching he did because the number of coachees coming forward in his organisation was insufficient to sustain his practice. For Paul Lewis, most of his internal coachees wanted the same thing, help to get through his organisation's promotion process. Coaching externally enabled him to tackle different sorts of coaching challenge.

Support for coaches is widely advocated, and the responsibility for providing that support is placed upon organisations' coaching schemes. The internal coaches interviewed in no way disagreed with this view. However, what this study highlighted for the first time was that where organisations failed to provide the support mechanisms coaches felt they needed, coaches themselves took steps to address the shortfall. Support was recognised by coaches as important to sustain their practice and was therefore something they took personal responsibility for.

Keep coaching under the radar – Segregate roles

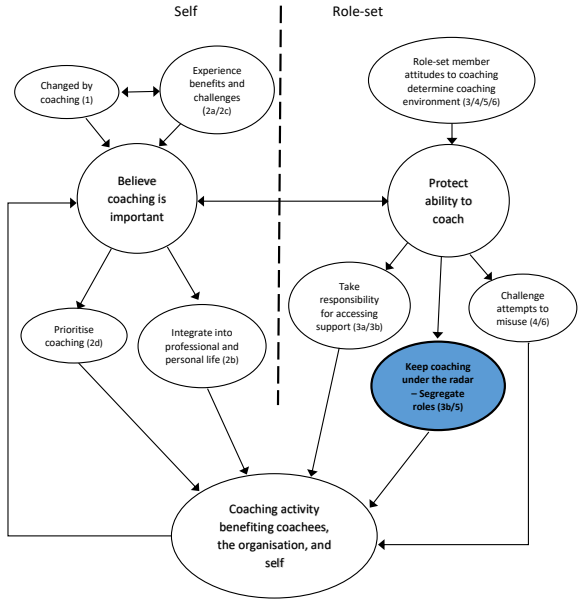


Fig. 6.1g Keeping coaching under the radar – Segregate roles

It was clear from the survey that, overwhelmingly for the coaches who took part, coaching was important to them; certainly, worth the effort involved. As already discussed in this chapter, the experience of being an internal coach led to them integrating coaching into their professional and often their personal lives. But coaches also segregated their formal organisational responsibilities, keeping their coaching role under the radar, to protect their ability to keep coaching (Fig. 6.1g). The survey carried out found that the majority of participants restricted the amount of coaching they did to avoid conflict with their day-job. These results suggest that for many coaches a balance has to be struck between their different roles. But within the coaching literature it appeared that little consideration had been given to how internal coaches balance their coaching role with their other organisational responsibilities, beyond dealing with the consequences.

St John-Brooks (2014) suggested that balancing coaching with the day-job is a challenge because of time pressures, the risk that the coach's line manager might withdraw support, and because coaches might experience feelings of guilt at spending time away from their day-job. She advised coaching scheme managers to recruit more internal coaches than they actually needed to allow for the inevitable attrition. Knights and Poppleton (2008) found that tension between coach role and day-job was reported to have led to coaches giving up the coaching role, though the source of this tension was not stated. Time and work pressures have also been identified as inhibiting factors in the decision to mentor (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997). However, there appears to have been no research carried out to explore what internal coaches, or mentors, do to address the challenge of balancing their different roles. In the current study all the internal coaches interviewed were asked

about balancing coaching with their other roles. Coaches acknowledged that it was sometimes hard to find the time to coach but felt strongly that they had a responsibility to make the time. The coaches made the effort to fit coaching into their professional lives because it was important, integral to them.

Asked how they balanced their coaching and other roles, coaches' responses were remarkably consistent, and not affected by whether the coach was working under organisational floodlights or coaching in the shadows. Coaches stated that they analysed their available capacity based upon their other commitments, and then committed that capacity to coaching, either formally, by telling their scheme leader how many coachees they could take on (for example, Phil Green), or by making a personal commitment to them self (for example, Anthony Bennett). In practice the coaches were managing their different formal role responsibilities by separating or segregating them and allocating time to each. Carton and Ungureanu (2018) studied a group of 16 scholar-practitioners who experienced role tension, in their case because of differences between the way individuals wanted to integrate their different roles whilst their organisation wanted the roles to be segregated. One strategy identified for managing this tension was to bound and plan each role, that is to segregate them, and to re-plan and re-order the roles periodically based upon priorities, which has similarities with the approach that the coaches described. However, Carton and Ungureanu (2018) suggested that one consequence of this role-bounding and planning approach was that there was little sharing of knowledge across roles, which was not the case with the internal coaches who had clearly integrated coaching skills and behaviours into their other roles: at work and at home. One consequence of the approach adopted though, which the coaches recognised, was that it meant they limited the amount of formal coaching they did, and this led Janet Crosier and Anthony Bennett to reflect that they believed they could be better coaches if they could coach more frequently.

Once a commitment to coaching had been made, role balancing was achieved by planning and diary management. Notably, planned coaching sessions were prioritised and protected. Allen et al (1997) found that job induced stress increased mentors' awareness of barriers to their mentoring, also reported by Allen, Poteet and Burroughs (1997), but did not impact mentors' intention to continue mentoring. In this study coaches acknowledged that from time to time they had been faced with additional workload commitments, such as projects, which led to them having to reassess their capacity to coach, and several coaches had reduced the amount of coaching they did, faced with this situation. But, as Allen et al (1997) had found with mentors, coaches were clear that such a reduction was temporary and capacity driven, not a reflection of their commitment to coaching.

A number of the coaches interviewed believed that the nature of their day-job gave them the flexibility needed to fit in their coaching, though they assumed that others wouldn't have this same freedom. Mullins (2016) suggested that some role holders, by virtue of their senior position, have the

freedom to determine their own role goals and priorities, which, given that 82% of the survey participants described themselves as manager (Q8, n=484), including 43% as senior manager or director, might explain the flexibility coaches felt they had. Indeed, several of the coaches interviewed made it clear that they would not accept line manager interference in how they managed their time (for example, Lucy Moore). However, as already discussed the coaching role was largely invisible to coaches' line managers. Merton (1957) suggested that if the circumstances in which a role takes place mean that it is hidden from view of the role-set then the role holder is less likely to experience interference from the role-set: the role holder will have greater freedom of action. So, although the coaches interviewed regarded lack of line manager interest in their coaching role as the basis for their freedom to coach, what they were actually describing often was that their coaching activity was hidden from their line manager and other members of their day-job role-set: coaching activity was kept under the radar. Jim Rhodes went even further admitting that he hadn't told his new line manager that he was a coach, concerned to ensure that he wasn't prevented from coaching.

The study found that rather than manage multiple roles by either largely integrating or segregating them, internal coaches appear to both integrate coaching skills, behaviours and values into their other activities, but segregate their formal coaching practice from their day-job to enable them to balance the two roles. The segregation strategy does appear to help internal coaches manage their multiple roles, but it also appears to be a way for the coaches to protect their freedom to continue coaching.

Challenge attempts to misuse

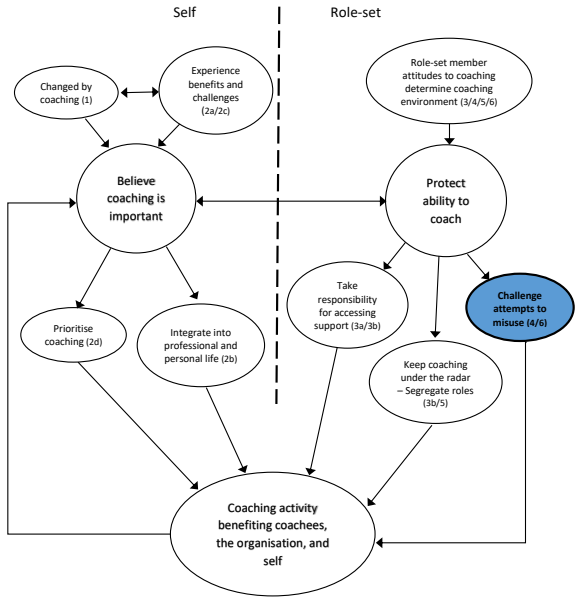


Fig. 6.1h Challenge attempts to misuse

The study found that internal coaches were concerned about attempts to misuse coaching by three groups of stakeholders - coachees, coachee's line managers, and potential new internal coaches – and took steps to challenge them (Fig. 6.1h). St John-Brooks' (2010) study of ethical dilemmas faced by internal coaches identified challenges related to client boundary management, and many of the coaches interviewed had experienced coachees or line managers with inappropriate expectations of what the coach would do or could achieve: fix a line manager's subordinate (Julie Foster); demonstrate that they had ticked the personal development box (Paul Lewis); gain access to the coach's day-job through the coaching relationship (Steve Dodds). Coaches saw two reasons for these behaviours: inadequate communication within the organisation of what coaching was, and was not, and stakeholders trying to use coaching, or the coach for inappropriate personal gain. However, these experiences led coaches to take action: correct stakeholder's misunderstanding; address role boundaries during initial contracting with coachees and line managers; and occasionally, to terminate a coaching relationship.

Asked during the study how they would respond to a colleague who said to them that they were thinking of becoming an internal coach the responses of every interviewee, except one, demonstrated coaches strong belief that there were appropriate reasons for wanting to be an internal coach, and inappropriate reasons: protecting coaching from the 'wrong sort of coach' would guide the conversation with their colleague.

Research on mentors has suggested that alongside personal learning mentors receive other benefits which influence their intention to mentor: support from mentees, role enhancement, increased influence and career development (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Bozionelos, 2004; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002; Kram, 1985; Newby and Heide, 1992; Ragins and Kram, 2007). These could arguably be characterised as having a 'self-advancement' motive. Though rarely acknowledged by the internal coaches in the initial survey, during interviews coaches made clear their belief that some of their colleagues were motivated to become internal coaches for these reasons, and that unlike mentoring this was not acceptable. The theme 'our kind of coach' (chapter 5) captured coaches' concerns, often strongly expressed, that some colleagues selfishly just wanted to become coaches to be able to tick that box. The coaches interviewed felt that these colleagues were a potential danger to coachees and to coaching in their organisation. But the possibility that some would-be coach applicants might represent a risk to coaching in their organisation is not raised in the coaching literature, including that literature advising organisations how to recruit and select internal coaches for a coaching scheme (for example, Hawkins, 2012; St John-Brooks, 2014). The strength of feeling expressed by coaches in this study about the risk that these inappropriately motivated coaches represent suggests that this gap in the coaching scheme literature is a significant oversight.

Within the coaching literature fitness to coach is discussed in two contexts: internal coach recruitment and selection and the debate about professionalisation. The focus of both is on assessing capability to be a coach. Within the literature on setting up a coaching scheme in an organisation the advice is that selection criteria should include consideration of skills and competencies, availability to coach, including line manager support, and orientation towards the development of others (Hawkins, 2012; Keddy and Johnson, 2011; St John-Brooks, 2014). But this advice about which selection criteria might be used to screen applicants is surprisingly general in nature. For example, St John-Brooks (2014) suggests a range of criteria that could be considered rather than being definitive, and Hawkins (2012) covers the topic only briefly, and in general terms. Membership criteria are also at the heart of the ongoing debate about coaching becoming a profession. For a group to have professional status it is deemed to require a distinct body of knowledge, formal qualifications, codes of conduct, and a regulatory body with the power to control membership: barriers to entry (Grant and Cavanagh, 2004). The criteria by which barriers to membership would be created being promoted by coaching's professional bodies are competency based: training, qualifications, accreditation. These criteria for inclusion, or exclusion, again focus on capability assessment. However, additionally, competency assessment as part of the professional body accreditation process is also linked to the number of coaching hours accrued (Bachkirova and Lawton Smith, 2015; Garvey, Stokes and Megginson, 2018), which arguably might exclude part-time internal coaches completely.

The current study found that whilst the internal coaches interviewed had strong views about the criteria for becoming a coach, they were different to those emphasised in the coaching literature. For the coaches interviewed, coaching was a serious undertaking requiring an absolute commitment, and was for the benefit of others, not a vehicle for personal advancement. The emphasis for the internal coaches was on testing the motivation and commitment of potential new coaches rather than on assessing their skills or competencies. Coaches were concerned that only those volunteers who shared their motivation and commitment should join them as coaches. Although the coaches interviewed worked in nine different organisations, there appeared to be a shared ethos which they were all anxious to protect. They were, in effect, stating their belief that barriers to entry should be in place, but rather than focussing on competencies, qualifications, capability, and coaching hours the coaches interviewed emphasised the requirement, as an internal coach, to fully commit to the service of your colleagues: to put others before self.

Summary

The study has provided new insights into how internal coaches respond to the environment in which their coaching takes place, the steps they take to protect their ability to coach because they

believe that coaching is important. It challenges the assumption put forward in the coaching literature that for coaching to be successful in an organisation a supportive environment is required. Those internal coaches coaching within a supportive organisation – coaching under organisational floodlights – aligned themselves with and supported their organisation's coaching strategy. But those coaches whose organisation was not supportive of coaching – who coached in the shadows - became activists, working to keep coaching available in their organisation, because they believed coaching was beneficial to those they coached, and to their organisation.

There is no doubt that a supportive environment is helpful to the internal coach. And whilst some of the coaches involved in the research had continued to coach in the shadows it is not known how many coaches gave up coaching when they experienced the light by which they coached go out. However, it is clear from this study that a supportive coaching environment is not essential.

The study has also highlighted for the first time that, whether coaching under organisational floodlights or in the shadows, internal coaches take proactive steps to ensure they are able to continue and develop their coaching practice. Coaches described taking responsibility for accessing the support mechanisms they needed, whether that meant taking full advantage of what their organisation made available or going outside their organisation if necessary to have their support needs met. Coaches took steps to ensure that the performance of their other organisational responsibilities could not be criticised, and the study has highlighted how role visibility is used sometimes to keep coaching activity beneath the radar. And, coaches expressed strong views about the need to challenge colleagues they who they saw as trying to misuse coaching for their own ends. Internal coaches take steps to protect their ability to coach.

The internal coach role: Different on the inside than it appears from outside

As the findings from the study were explored the impression formed that the internal coach role looked very different to those on the outside than the lived experience of those on the inside. Viewed from the outside coaching appears to be a small part-time role for the majority internal coaches. In a survey conducted in 2009 (n=123), St John-Brooks (2009) found that 76% of participants coached for 10 hours or less per month, and in the current study (Q6, n=481) 79% of coaches coached for 5 hours or less per month, and 93% for 10 hours or less. Both surveys demonstrate that for many internal coaches formal coaching is a small role. Whether the number of hours spent coaching is reducing is more difficult to say as 35% of the coaches in St John-Brooks' (2009) survey described

coaching as formally part of their role, and 5% were full-time coaches, whereas coaches for whom coaching was a major part of their role were specifically excluded from the current study. But the coaches interviewed were clear that the time they spent coaching formally did not reflect the place coaching occupied in their professional and personal lives.

Three factors appeared to affect the external perspective of internal coaches versus their experience of being an internal coach: the depiction of internal coaches in the literature; the visibility of the role; and the extent to which coaches integrated coaching into their lives. It can be argued that the coaching literature, with its focus on outcomes and benefits (Garvey, 2011; Gray, Garvey and Lane, 2016; Hamlin, Ellinger and Beattie, 2008), has largely ignored the internal coach, reducing the role to a delivery mechanism. In doing so it has contributed to an external view of internal coaching as a minor part-time role. Further, it is suggested that because the internal coach is an 'insider' they face challenges (Frisch, 2001; St John-Brooks, 2010), for example related to trust and confidentiality (de Haan, 2008; Mihiotis and Argirou, 2016), that limit their effectiveness and require that support mechanisms such as supervision be put in place (Clutterbuck, Whitaker and Lucas, 2013; Maxwell, 2011). But the coaches in the current study disputed this limiting characterisation of their coach role. They recognised that being an insider raised some challenges but felt that they had taken the necessary steps to address them, as they would address any challenge faced in their other organisational roles. The dilemmas faced by the internal coaches were not experienced as significant in the way they are portrayed in the coaching literature.

The visibility, or lack of visibility, of the internal coach role was experienced as both an issue and an opportunity by coaches. They experienced, as Biddle (1979) suggested, that lack of visibility of their coaching resulted in poor understanding of the role by some stakeholders, and limited stakeholder interest in the role as Katz and Kahn (1978) predicted, which impacted the support and recognition they received. However, as noted by Merton (1957), those whose role is largely invisible to stakeholders are subject to limited scrutiny, and some coaches appeared to use the limited visibility of their coach role to give them the freedom to decide how they would fit coaching around their other organisational responsibilities. Further, as Mullins (2016) suggested, as senior managers in their organisation many had the freedom to set their own priorities, which for them included coaching. The result was that coaches often kept their coaching below the radar monitoring delivery of their other organisational responsibilities, but in doing so they further reduced the visibility of coaching to those looking from the outside.

The experience of coaching had changed the internal coaches in the study. As a result, they had integrated coaching into their professional and personal lives. Coaching was not just a task they performed for a few hours each month; it had become who they were. However, Ashforth, Kreiner

and Fugate (2000) pointed out that highly integrated roles are hard to distinguish from each other; they lose their individual identities. Several coaches in the study recognised that because they used a coaching style most of the time their coaching would not stand out, viewed from the outside.

The image conjured by my discussions with the coaches in this study was of the internal coach role as the Tardis, Dr Who's travelling companion on the BBC since 1963: much bigger on the inside than it seems on the outside. Viewed from the outside the Tardis seemed unremarkable and was therefore overlooked or ignored, its capability unrecognised, which appeared to be the experience of many of the internal coaches interviewed. This study has shown however that internal coaches, like the Tardis, do not passively occupy their environment but act to manage it, and the stakeholders they encounter; that internal coaches are more capable and independent-minded than they are often portrayed. And perhaps most surprisingly, both have the ability and the determination to protect themselves in hostile environments.

Summary

The literature review identified that there has been very little research reported that has examined how internal coaches experience the coach role, and that the few studies that have been published are small. The aim of the current study, the largest so far to explore the internal coach experience, is to address this deficiency. The study seeks to extend our knowledge of internal coaches by exploring their experience of being a coach, but also to understand the impact that this experience has on them, and what they do as a result.

In this chapter a conceptual map of the impact of internal coaches' experience of being a coach has been introduced (Fig. 6.1) and discussed. It has shown how the coaches' experiences of being a coach impacted their belief in the benefits and importance of coaching and has identified the ways in which they sought to proactively incorporate coaching into their lives and the steps they took to protect their ability to keep coaching. The chapter has highlighted that, as a result of their experiences, coaching is more important to the coaches than it may appear to people around them. Below I summarise the contribution to knowledge made by this research, before setting it out more fully in the next chapter.

The current study has shown the importance of coaching to these internal coaches, their belief in the benefits of coaching to colleagues coached, their organisation, and to themselves. It has highlighted how, as a result, coaches take steps to incorporate coaching into their lives, and the proactive steps coaches take to protect their ability to keep coaching. The study has substantially added to and extended the limited empirical evidence published about the benefits internal coaches

experience as coaches, the impact on coaches of the environment within which their coaching takes place, and the nature of their relationships with key members of their role-set. Visibility of the coach role, or the lack of visibility, has been shown to be a key influence on role-set members' understanding of the internal coach role and therefore of their attitude towards the coaches, and two key assumptions that underpin the internal coaching discourse - the need for a supportive coaching environment, and the impact of being an insider on internal coaches' capability – are questioned by the findings of these coaches' lived experience. Specifically, the study sheds new light on

- The role of prior experience in the 'conversion' to coaching and on the decision to become an internal coach
- The extent to which internal coaches choose to integrate coaching into their lives, professional and personal
- The different environments in which internal coaches coach – 'under organisational floodlights' or 'in the shadows of their organisation' – and how these environments impact their attitude to coaching
- The relationship between the subordinate-as-coach and their line manager
- The steps internal coaches take to protect their freedom to continue coaching.

The next chapter will also discuss the implications of these new findings for coaching practice.

Chapter 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This research asked: How does the experience of being an internal coach impact the coach? To answer this question the study explored how the stakeholders and environment in which internal coaches coach are experienced and interpreted by the coaches, how the coach role impacts them and what place coaching occupies in their lives. And as a result, what steps internal coaches take to manage their coach role alongside their other organisational responsibilities.

In this, the final chapter, the contribution to knowledge made by this study is expanded upon. The implications of these findings for coaching practice are then discussed, the limitations of the study are acknowledged, and suggestions made for further research relating to internal coaches. Finally, I revisit the question that led me to undertake this journey – is my experience of being an internal coach unique to me or is it shared by other internal coaches? – and reflect on what I have learned.

Contribution to knowledge

This study is, to the best of my knowledge, the largest so far carried out which has explored the internal coach experience and provides new insights about the impact of that experience on internal coaches. The research has enabled a conceptual map of the impact of their coaching experience on internal coaches to be created (Fig. 6.1). The study identified how coaches' lived experience of coaching changes them. Their belief that coaching is important leads them to prioritise coaching and to integrate coaching behaviours and values into their wider professional and personal lives. The study found that coaches operate under different conditions - coaching under organisational floodlights or coaching in the shadows – created by the attitudes of coaching role-set members in their organisation. However, the coaches in this study adapted to these different environments, and took steps to protect their ability to keep coaching. The coaches in the study described these steps: taking responsibility for accessing the support they need, segregating their formal coaching role from other organisational responsibilities to keep their coaching under the radar, and challenging attempts to misuse coaching. Coaches were driven by their belief that coaching was beneficial to those they coached, to their organisation, and to themselves.

Four earlier studies of the internal coach experience involved a small number of participants, three drawn from single organisations: St John-Brooks (2009; 2010) surveyed 123 coaches to identify the most common ethical dilemmas they identified facing; Leonard-Cross (2010) conducted a 3-question survey of 52 coaches, part of a study whose focus was the coachee experience of coaching; Mukherjee (2012) studied changes in 19 managers who became coaches in a coaching pilot project

lasting 6-9 months; and Feehily (2018) carried out an interpretive phenomenological analysis of interviews with 4 coaches. The current study has therefore added substantially to the previously limited empirical evidence pertaining to internal coaches, and as such has extended our knowledge of this important group. The study has also, for the first time, provided evidence to support the assertion made by Garvey (2011; 2014) and Western (2012) that there are important similarities between mentors and internal coaches relating to their motivations to practise and the rewards they experience, though it has also highlighted a key difference in relation to the benefits mentors gain from their mentees, which the internal coaches in this study did not seek to receive. However, in addition to contributing significant empirical evidence which supports much of what was previously advocated but poorly evidenced about internal coaches, this study has also brought to light five new aspects of the internal coach experience: that

1. Prior experience is a motivational factor in the decision to coach
2. Coaching is integrated into professional and personal life
3. The coaching environment shapes the approach coaches take
4. Tacit agreement exists between the coach and their line manager not to discuss coaching
5. Coaches act to protect their freedom to coach.

These are expanded and explained below.

Prior experience is a motivational factor in the decision to coach

In the current study, almost a quarter of survey participants said that they were motivated to become an internal coach because of some prior experience of coaching. Although prior experience of being mentored has been found to positively impact the motivation to become a mentor (Allen, Poteet and Burroughs, 1997; Allen et al, 1997; Ragins and Scandura, 1999), this study is the first to highlight the impact of prior experience on the decision to become an internal coach. The prior experience was often that of being coached, paralleling what has been found with mentors, but for some it was the opportunity to formalise what had previously been an informal coaching approach or style, whilst for others it was the result of an unexpected encounter with coaching, perhaps as part of a management development course. During interviews, coaches frequently described being surprised by what coaching, or the coach was able to achieve during these encounters. The language coaches used - “light bulb moment,” “life-changing,” “powerful,” “how did they make me do that?” - acknowledged that there was a point in their encounter with coaching that something changed for

them. What coaches appeared to be describing was a conversion experience, which often pre-dated any thoughts of being a coach, but which led directly to them deciding to become an internal coach.

What those coaches interviewed who described a point of 'conversion' appeared to have in common was that the trigger was a practical, hands-on experience. For some this experience was an event whilst working one-to-one with a coach, a first-hand experience of what the coach could help a coachee achieve, but for several the moment happened on a course, the 'coach' or 'coachee' opposite them as much a novice as they were. Joy Pendle described a one-day coaching 'taster' course, of which she had such low expectations, as the moment when she realised how powerful coaching was; the start of her coaching journey. These initial experiences that Joy and other coaches described changed them. It had been suggested previously that coaching changed the internal coach (Feehily, 2018; Mukherjee, 2012), but the current study has shown that this change can occur before becoming a coach. An encounter with coaching could profoundly change those involved, inspire them, and be the trigger to become a coach.

Coaching is integrated into professional and personal life

That coaching had changed those who took part in the study was further demonstrated by the place it occupied in participants' lives. Though coaching was formally only a very small part of their role, this study found that as a result of their experience many internal coaches had incorporated coaching skills, behaviours and values into their professional and personal lives. Whilst previous studies had highlighted the benefits internal coaches derived as a result of the skills they acquired as coaches and implied their use beyond the coaching room (Feehily, 2018; Mukherjee, 2012), this study has highlighted the extent to which some internal coaches integrate coaching into their lives.

The study has shown that whilst the coaches involved undoubtably developed or enhanced a range of skills as a result of their coaching, they also changed the approach they adopted towards others. Coaching values and behaviours were internalised, and as a result, managing their team was no longer just about ensuring its objectives were delivered, there was now also an obligation felt to develop team members. This was powerfully articulated by Anthony Bennett when he said of coaching, "it's the right thing to do," "it's the right way to treat people." Changing their approach to 'others' also included, for many of the coaches interviewed, their family. Coaches described how coaching had either helped them as parents or enabled them to help their children help themselves. As a result of their experiences, the decision to incorporate coaching widely into their lives, professional and personal, was a choice that these coaches made. For them, coaching was not just something they did, it had become who they were. The environment in which coaches worked

appeared not to be a factor in the decision to integrate coaching into coaches' lives, but the environment did affect the way they fitted coaching into their work lives.

Coaching environment shapes the approach coaches take

The experience of being an internal coach changed how these coaches behaved, at work and at home, but the environment in which they coached also impacted how they approached coaching. The current study identified two contrasting environments experienced by internal coaches: 'coaching under organisational floodlights' and 'coaching in the shadows'. Those coaching under floodlights appeared to act as followers, supporting delivery of their organisation's coaching strategy, whereas those coaching in the shadows became activists, sustaining their coaching practice in spite of their organisation's attitude towards coaching. The emphasis within the coaching literature is on the importance of creating a supportive environment – coaching widely understood, supported, and role-modelled – if coaching is to be successful (Clutterbuck and Megginson, 2005; Clutterbuck, Megginson and Bajer, 2016; Feehily, 2018; Hawkins, 2012). Those 'coaching under organisational floodlights' described a supportive environment similar to that advocated in this literature, but, for those 'coaching in the shadows' the environment they experienced was not supportive of their coaching and reflected the sort of environment in which coaching would be expected to fail. Indeed, it seems likely that some internal coaches, faced with the loss of light by which to coach, will have quit coaching but that the current research failed to reach them. And yet, in spite of this, the current study has shown that there are coaches who continue to coach in the shadows of their organisation.

Those 'coaching under organisational floodlights' felt protected as coaches, the organisation's support made it difficult for others to criticise their role as coach. In turn, these coaches aligned with and delivered the organisation's coaching strategy, and accepted the need to stretch themselves if required, to meet the organisation's coaching needs. Coaches 'coaching under organisational floodlights' behaved as followers, their focus to deliver coaching for their organisation. In contrast, those 'coaching in the shadows' felt they were not supported as coaches and even experienced the value of their coaching role being questioned. The focus of these coaches, and the reason they continued to coach, was the benefit they were able to deliver to those they worked with, the coachees. For these coaches, coaching was guided by their own values and beliefs rather than by the organisation. Coaches 'coaching in the shadows' were activists, working to sustain their coaching practice because for them, and they believed for their colleagues, coaching was the right thing to do. Internal coaches adapted their approach to the environment in which they coached, working in the shadows if necessary, rather than stop coaching.

The coach and their line manager: A tacit agreement not to discuss coaching

Whether coaching under organisational floodlights or in the shadows, coaches had to navigate their line manager's attitude towards coaching. The study is the first to engage internal coaches on their relationship, as coaches, with their line manager. Whilst some coaches had experienced a line manager who was supportive of and interested in their coach role, and at the other extreme some coaches had been blocked from coaching by their line manager, the most frequently described attitude experienced was of line manager indifference. Applying a role theory lens to the coach/line manager relationship highlighted the significance of role visibility in understanding the line manager's attitude. Several coaches realised and acknowledged that their line manager had neither visibility of nor a stake in their coaching role, and therefore unsurprisingly had no interest in it. The value the organisation placed upon coaching was experienced as having some, limited, impact on line managers' attitudes: the wish to be seen to align with and support the organisation's strategy, or at least feeling unable to block a subordinate's coaching activity because to do so would be contra to the organisation's espoused values.

One consequence of the lack of line manager interest experienced by many internal coaches was that the contribution their coaching made to the organisation was not acknowledged by their line manager when their performance was reviewed. However, whilst this lack of formal recognition was clearly a source of irritation for some, on the whole coaches appeared to feel that they got what they needed from their line manager: the freedom to coach, or "an absence of barriers."

The contrasting position of line manager and subordinate-as-coach was reinforced by two coaches in the study. Janet Crosier's line manager was them self a coach, and Shirley Atkins was a line manager to a coach as well as being a coach herself. Both demonstrated that being a coach did not increase the line manager's interest in their direct report's coaching activity or make their attitude towards their subordinate's coaching role more positive.

Coaches act to protect their freedom to coach

It was clear from the survey and interview evidence that coaching was very important to the internal coaches who took part in this research, and the study sheds light for the first time on the steps internal coaches took to ensure that they were able to coach alongside their other organisational responsibilities. Coaches consistently said that the first step they took was to calculate the capacity that they could devote to coaching. Delivering that commitment, once made, was then a matter of diary management, and coaches actively sought to protect diarised coaching sessions: as Anthony Bennett said, "[coaching is] the last thing I would move in my diary." The importance coaches placed on their coaching was also demonstrated in the way coaches took responsibility for accessing the

support they needed to sustain their practice, whether the environment in which they coached was supportive of coaching or not. Those 'coaching under organisational floodlights' acknowledged their responsibility to utilise the support available to them: training, CPD, supervision. Coaches 'coaching in the shadows' took steps to have their support needs met. Examples of actions taken by coaches to get the support they needed included engaging their peers to find solutions to challenges they faced, lobbying their organisation to provide additional support such as access to supervision, and looking externally to have the gaps in their support needs filled. Indeed, filling a support gap was the only reason given by the majority of internal coaches interviewed for engaging with the external coaching world.

Coaches also demonstrated their desire to protect their coaching in two ways. As already discussed, coaches recognised that their line manager had limited visibility of or interest in their coaching role. Some of the coaches interviewed used this situation to keep their coaching activity 'beneath the radar' monitoring their day-job and to thus avoid having to account for or justify the time they spent coaching. One of the coaches, Jim Rhodes, had taken the decision not to tell his latest line manager that he was a coach in order to avoid any risk of losing his freedom to coach. So, whilst the coaches in the study had widely incorporated coaching into the way they interacted with others, they segregated their formal coaching role from their other organisational responsibilities in order to protect their freedom to continue coaching.

The second way in which the internal coaches sought to protect their coaching practice was through the concern they articulated that their coaching scheme should not admit 'the wrong sort of coach'. All the coaches interviewed bar one strongly expressed the view that new coaches had to be motivated by the desire to help others, their colleagues, rather than being motivated by self-interest, and that they had to be prepared to put the required effort in rather than just to tick the coaching box on their CV. Coaches interviewed shared the fear that the 'wrong sort of coach' could adversely impact those they worked with, would damage the reputation of coaching in their organisation, and ultimately therefore be a threat to other coaches' practices.

Measured in hours of coaching per month, for the internal coaches who took part in the current study, coaching was a very small part of their role: as Gillian Black acknowledged, "in terms of hours I don't do as much [coaching] as I do other things." But she seemed to speak for all the coaches interviewed when she went on to say, "but it is one of the most important things that I do." Coaching occupied a key place in these coaches professional and personal lives, and they actively managed their ability to be a coach.

The study demonstrated that the internal coaches who took part experienced their coaching role as being different to the perception of the role that those viewing it from the outside formed. On the inside the coach role was bigger, had become all encompassing, and was experienced as much more important, impactful and rewarding than was visible externally: the internal coach role could be regarded as a Tardis role.

Implications for coaching practice

Surveys of coaching make clear that organisations have invested significantly in the recruitment, training and development of internal coaches, and continue to do so: internal coaches are important in delivering coaching activity in organisations. An understanding of how these coaches experience their role is therefore necessary to be able to support their needs, and ultimately retain their services ensuring a return on the organisation's investment. And yet, to date very little research has been reported into how internal coaches experience the coach role. The current study has provided new insights into the internal coach experience and the impact that experience has on the coaches. The findings of the study therefore offer a useful contribution to the further development of coaching practice relating to internal coaches. Below, six recommendations are made.

The first recommendation is to stimulate internal coach recruitment by giving potential new coaches the opportunity to experience coaching. The study highlighted the role that prior experience played for many participants in their decision to become an internal coach. Prior to their encounter with coaching becoming a coach was not something many of them had considered. Whilst that prior experience could be of having been in a coaching relationship, for some the study showed that the experience was brief, perhaps just a 'taster' session as part of a development course. That 'taster' experience might be of being coached by a fellow course member or of coaching a fellow course member. What appeared to be important about these experiences was that they were practical: hands on. Several of the coaches interviewed pinpointed this early experience as the moment when 'the light went on' and they realised how powerful coaching could be. On the evidence of this study, it would be beneficial to offer potential new internal coaches the opportunity to experience coaching, as part of the recruitment process. That is, bring volunteers together to work in dyads or triads as many coaches do in training, but with the objective of enabling them to experience what it is to be a coach and be coached. Such an experience, based upon the findings of this study, would create coaching converts and stimulate them to become an internal coach.

The second recommendation is that existing internal coaches articulate to potential new coaches the benefits they have experienced as a result of being a coach. Internal coaches in the study

articulated clearly the positive impact that the experience of being a coach had upon them. Becoming an internal coach had changed most of the coaches interviewed. But the study also highlighted that some of these changes were not visible to other stakeholders. Coaches had incorporated coaching into their professional and often their personal lives. They did this because they believed that as a result, they were now better managers, leaders, parents. But coaching had not only given them skills, they had also taken on the values they associated with coaching. This changed their attitude to and approach towards their colleagues and their children. Their belief in coaching led these internal coaches to make coaching part of who they were. The study found that the coach role appears to be different viewed from the inside than is apparent from the outside. Therefore, in trying to recruit volunteer internal coaches, and to educate colleagues about the value of coaching the study suggests that internal coaches themselves are best placed to articulate to colleagues the value they have gained from being a coach and from integrating coaching into their professional lives; that for them, being a coach has been highly beneficial.

The study identified that internal coaches have clear expectations of those who seek to join them as internal coaches, their motivation being to protect coaching in their organisation and therefore protect their own practice. The third recommendation is that it be made explicit during the recruitment process what the expectations of new coaches will be, including those of their fellow coaches. Internal coaches' concerns focussed upon two areas: a new coach's motivation to become a coach and the commitment to coaching required. Whilst the motivations for becoming a coach identified most frequently in the survey related to self-development, the coaches interviewed expressed strongly that a new coach's priority should be to help and support others rather than to benefit personally. Coaching had changed these coaches from 'self' focussed to 'other' focussed, and they expected new coaches to be 'other' focussed too. The coaches in the study also wanted to ensure that new coaches understood the level of commitment needed to fulfil the internal coach role. None of the coaches interviewed were allocated protected time for their coaching work. Those potentially taking on the coach role therefore needed to consider how they would manage and protect coaching time alongside their other organisational responsibilities. Overall, the internal coaches' concern, often based upon personal experience, was that the 'wrong sort of coach' might be recruited and that these coaches could damage coachees and the reputation of coaching in their organisation. The study therefore suggests that existing internal coaches should have a role to play in ensuring that potential new coach recruits understand what is expected of them as coaches, by their peers as well as by the organisation.

What the latter two points discussed highlight is that internal coaches see the coach role differently experienced from the inside than it might be described by those on the outside. There is

therefore an argument for ensuring that potential new coaches are given access to existing internal coaches to make sure that new recruits have the opportunity to gain an insider's view of what the role entails, and that they understand what expectations the group of coaches they are joining will have of them.

The fourth recommendation relates to internal coaches' line managers. The study exposed the lack of alignment between line manager and subordinate when it came to the subordinate's coach role. Coaches generally characterised their line manager's attitude towards their coaching as ambivalent, 'an absence of barriers'. Most of the coaches in the study found ways to work round their line manager and keep coaching; at least one coach went to the extreme of not telling their line manager they were a coach. However, the lack of line manager support experienced by many coaches was a source of tension and for some at least, an obstacle to coaching. Coaches felt that their line managers lacked visibility and understanding of their coaching role and had different priorities. What was not identified by the study, but seems likely, is that line manager obstruction causes some internal coaches to give up their coach role. A further consequence of their line manager's lack of interest in their coaching expressed by a number of internal coaches was that the contribution their coaching made to the organisation was not recognised when their performance was reviewed. During interviews several internal coaches identified the likely cause of this misalignment as being that line managers were not accountable for their subordinate's coaching activity and did not benefit from it, at least not directly. It is recommended that in order to get the most out of their investment in coaching, and specifically their internal coaches, organisations should review the role of internal coach line manager. Giving line managers responsibility for ensuring that their subordinate-coaches are able to perform their organisational coaching role, and for recognising their contribution as coach, would give line managers a role in delivering the organisation's coaching strategy and promote greater alignment between the internal coach and their line manager.

The fifth recommendation is to recognise internal coaches as a source of coaching skills and memory in the event that the organisation's appetite for coaching is lost or diminishes for a period of time. The study identified two different environments in which internal coaches worked – 'coaching under organisational floodlights' and 'coaching in the shadows' – and found that changes in key stakeholders could lead to a switch in environment. Whilst the study found that working under organisational floodlights coaches acted as followers supporting delivery of the organisation's coaching strategy, it also identified that those coaching in the shadows, as activists, represent a viable coaching resource working to sustain coaching in spite of the unsupportive environment. Whilst loss of organisational support for coaching must inevitably make sustaining a coaching scheme challenging, the study findings suggest that under such circumstances those internal coaches who

become activists, determined to sustain their coaching role, represent a resource that can be used to maintain a coaching capability in an organisation, thus ensuring that both the skills and the organisational memory of the benefits of coaching are not lost. It is recommended therefore that in the event of formal organisational support for coaching being lost efforts be made by those who remain committed to coaching to enable these internal coach activists to continue coaching. This of course may require those other than just the internal coaches to become activists and work in the shadows.

Finally, the study made clear that, with one or two exceptions, there was no appetite among the internal coaches to engage with the external coaching world. Asked, most of the coaches interviewed saw no benefit to them doing so. The only caveats to this were if there was a need to address a support gap, or if the outside coaching world came into the organisation. The explanation given was time constraints, because coaching was a part-time role. It is recommended that if an organisation wishes to expand its coaches' knowledge and experience by exposing them to coaching beyond the organisation's boundaries then the time constraints part-time internal coaches work under need to be considered in setting up such a knowledge exchange. Additionally, the study suggests that the external coaching world, particularly the coaching bodies, need to think about the role they want to play in relation to internal coaches, because at present their role is not clear to the internal coaches who took part in this research. If the coaches in the study are typical of internal coaches generally then the coaching industry faces a difficult challenge to engage this increasingly important but disconnected group.

Limitations of the study

A key limitation of the study was the nature of the sample upon which it was based. It was not possible to establish the internal coach population making it impossible to select a random sample from that population. Because no accessible sampling frame was available a snowball sampling technique (Bryman, 2012) was used which employed 39 gatekeepers to distribute a link to the on-line questionnaire to internal coaches within their networks. This approach produced what was, in the context of research on internal coaches, a large sample (n=484), but the sample was nonetheless a non-probability sample. As Bryman (2012 p. 187) noted, a sample of this nature "implies that some units in the population are more likely to be selected than others." In this study the internal coaches who participated were self-selecting. It is arguable therefore that those most interested in and perhaps most committed to coaching would be more likely to take the time to complete the

questionnaire when the link to it appeared in their in-box, and be more likely to provide their contact details enabling them to be recruited for interview.

The survey found a unanimous commitment to continue coaching among participants, however there is evidence elsewhere that not all those who become internal coaches stay the course. For example, Knight and Poppleton (2008) found evidence of coach attrition, and in the coaching scheme to which I was a member from 2010, though 102 coaches were trained and accredited to coach by the organisation, when I retired at the end of 2017 there were fewer than 25 coaches still practising. Similarly, a conversation with the Head of Coaching at a large multinational corporation at an EMCC Research Conference (personal communication, June 2017) highlighted that only a quarter of the more than 2000 coaches that organisation had trained were still coaching at that time.

It seems likely therefore that although the current study has collected rich data from a large group of internal coaches, shedding new light on how this group experience being an internal coach, the views of those who had a less positive experience of being an internal coach may have been underrepresented. The experiences of these coaches, who chose not to continue coaching, perhaps represent a piece of the internal coach jigsaw that is still missing.

Recommendations for further research

Although the current study has increased our understanding of internal coaches, gaps remain. As the previous discussion on the limits of the study has highlighted, there is almost certainly a group of internal coaches whose experience of coaching resulted in them deciding not to continue to practise. This group represent a lost investment to the organisations who trained them and potentially a risk to the image of coaching in their organisation. Understanding their experience, and the factors that contributed to their decision to stop coaching, represents a further important piece of the internal coach jigsaw. Studying this group will present significant challenges to identify and gain access to individuals at the point they decide to stop coaching, almost certainly requiring the support of organisation scheme managers. Gaining the trust and agreement of these lapsing coaches to take part in the research will also undoubtably represent a challenge. But if the anecdotal evidence of the prevalence of internal coach attrition is true of the wider population then the need to understand why coaches give up coaching is evident.

The current study has also highlighted the need to further understand the experience of line managers in relation to coaching and their subordinates. Viewed from the perspective of the internal coaches in this study, coaches' line managers saw their subordinates coaching role very differently to the coaches, if they saw the role at all. In the study line managers were often represented as caught

between the expectation of the organisation that they support the coaching strategy and release their subordinate to coach, and the need to ensure the 'day-job' was delivered. For the line manager coaching is a non-essential role: the result, ambivalence; an absence of barriers. But further research is required if organisations are to understand what the line manager's lived experience of having a subordinate-as-coach is, and to identify what the implications of their experiences are for coaching and for the internal coaches that report to them.

That the internal coaches in the study believed in the value of coaching was demonstrated by the way in which they had incorporated it into their lives, and the steps they described taking to ensure that they could continue to coach. However, many of these coaches acknowledged that their belief in coaching was not shared by all of their colleagues. This difference in perspective represents a risk to efforts to embed coaching in organisations. Research is required to understand the basis for the formation of these opposing views about the value of coaching to the organisation and its people.

Lastly, the study has highlighted that the wider coaching industry was seen as largely irrelevant to the internal coaches who took part. The coaching bodies, such as EMCC and ICF, state their aim to promote and advance coaching for the benefit of society, making no distinction between external and internal coaches. Key means by which the professional bodies seek to advance coaching are through standards setting, training and CPD, and coach accreditation. Further research is required to understand to what extent these strategies align with the needs of internal coaches. An important question is whether, in relation to standards, CPD and accreditation, the requirements of internal coaches and external coaches are the same, or whether professional bodies should tailor their offerings to the specific and different needs of internal coaches.

Personal reflection

In the introduction to this thesis I acknowledged that a key driver for my research was to understand whether my experience of being an internal coach was unique to me or was shared by other internal coaches. I recognised that becoming a coach had had a profound impact on me: I had changed the way I chose to interact with others and the importance I placed on being able to help and support the development of others. Like Anthony Bennett, one of my interviewees, I had come to see coaching as "the right thing to do"; as "the right way to treat people." Some five years later, at the end of the research, I conclude that my experience of being an internal coach was not unique. I recognise in the experiences that the coaches I interviewed shared many aspects of my own coaching story. Like me, the majority of these internal coaches recognised that becoming a coach had changed them and the way they wanted to interact with those around them.

During our first year as coaches my coaching 'buddy' David and I were, I now realise, 'coaching under organisational floodlights', and we fell into the role of followers: our focus to deliver coaching for our colleagues and the organisation. But I now appreciate that even at that stage we had started to interpret what being a follower meant differently. Whilst coaching individuals, David's focus was the organisation, whereas mine was the individual not the organisation. Sometime after that period the coaching floodlights went out in that organisation and I spend my last years in the organisation coaching in the shadows. My reaction to this change was to find ways to continue coaching - I became an activist - but I find myself wondering how David, if he had not been made redundant, would have reacted. Would he have joined me in the shadows, or would he have stopped coaching because it was no longer the focus of the organisation?

Through my research I have also come to realise that activism can take different forms, beyond continuing to coach. Gillian Black's activism took the form of lobbying senior managers in her organisation to provide the funds needed to enable her and her fellow coaches to have supervision. Jim Rhodes in contrast became a member of the "Resistance," taking his coaching "underground," hidden from his manager. My own activism took three forms. Like Julie Foster, I always introduced myself as a coach as well as by my functional title: "I am a coach." Secondly, I made myself available to my fellow coaches as a source of support, someone they could approach; tangible proof that they were not alone. And thirdly, I prioritised my coaching activity. It never took second place to my other organisational responsibilities, whatever the attitude of the organisation's leadership at that time.

In conclusion, I reflect that my experience of being an internal coach is contained within, expressed by, the combined experiences of the internal coaches I met during the study. Unsurprisingly, no single coach's experience was an exact match for my own, but, as a group a shared experience emerged which I recognised as being my experience too.

References

Allen, T.D. (2007) Mentoring relationships from the perspective of the mentor. In: Ragins, B.R. and Kram, K.E. eds. *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research, and Practice.* Thousand Island, CA. Sage, pp.123-147.

Allen, T.D., Poteet, M.L. and Burroughs, S.M. (1997) The mentor's perspective: A qualitative inquiry and future research agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 51, pp. 70-89.

Allen, T.D., Poteet, M.L., Russell, J.E.A. and Dobbins, G.H. (1997) A field study of factors related to supervisors' willingness to mentor others. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 50, pp. 1-22.

Ashforth, B.E., Kreiner, G.E. and Fugate, M. (2000) All in a Day's Work: Boundaries and Micro Role Transitions. *The Academy of Management Review, 25(3), pp. 472-491.*

Athanasopoulou, A. and Dopson, S. (2018) A systematic review of executive coaching outcomes: Is it the journey or the destination that matters the most? *The Leadership Quarterly,* 29, pp. 70-88.

Bachkirova, T. and Lawton Smith, C. (2015) From Competencies to Capabilities in the assessment and accreditation of coaches. *International Journal of Evidence based Coaching and Mentoring,* 13(2), pp. 123-140.

Bacon, T.R. and Spear, K.I. (2003) *Adaptive coaching: The art and practice of a client-centred approach to performance improvement.* Palo Alto, CA. Davis-Black.

Biddle, B.J. (1986) Recent developments in role theory. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 12, pp. 67-92.

Biddle, B.J. (1979) *Role Theory: Expectations, Identities and Behaviors.* New York, Academic Press.

Biernacki, P. and Waldorf, D. (1981) Snowball sampling: Problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological Methods and Research,* 10(2), pp. 141-163.

Blackman, A. (2006) Factors that contribute to the effectiveness of business coaching: The coachee's perspective. *The Business Review, Cambridge,* 5(1), pp. 98-104

Blackman, A., Moscardo, G. and Gray, D.E. (2016) Challenges for the Theory and Practice of Business Coaching: A Systematic Review of Empirical Evidence. *Human Resource Development Review,* 15(4), pp. 459-486

Bloch, A. (2004) Survey research with refugees: A methodological perspective. *Policy Studies,* 25(2), pp. 139-151.

Bloch, A. (1999) Carrying out a survey of refugees: Some methodological considerations and guidelines. *Journal of Refugee Studies,* 12(4), pp. 367-383.

Bluckert, P. (2004) The state of play in corporate coaching: current and future trends. *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 36(2), pp. 53-56.

Bozionelos, N. (2004) Mentoring provided: Relation to mentor's career success, personality, and mentoring received. *Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 64, pp. 24-46.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2013) *Successful Qualitative Analysis*. London, Sage.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology,* 3(2), pp. 77-101.

Bresser, F. (2009) *Global Coaching Survey.* Bresser Consulting and Associates. Available from www.frank-bresser-consulting.com [Accessed 29th September 2019].

Brock, V. (2011) The secret history of coaching: What you know and what you don't know about how coaching got here and where coaching is going in the future. *The International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching,* 9(1), pp. 46-66.

Brock, V.G. (2014) *Sourcebook of Coaching History.* 2nd Ed. Printed by Amazon.

Brooks, I. and Wright, S. (2007) A survey of executive coaching practices in New Zealand. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 5(1), pp. 30-41.

Browne, K. (2005) Snowball sampling: Using social networks to research non-heterosexual women. *International Journal Social Research Methodology,* 8(1), pp. 47-60.

Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods.* 4th Ed. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Burdett, J.O. (1998) Forty things every manager should know about coaching. *Journal of Management Development,* 17(2), pp. 142-152.

Caplan, J. (2003) *Coaching for the Future.* London, CIPD.

Cappellari, L. and Turati, G. (2004) Volunteer labour supply: The role of workers' motivations. *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics,* 75(4), pp. 619-643.

Carter, A. (2005) *Providing Coaching Internally, a Literature Review.* Brighton, Institute of Employment Studies.

Carter, A. and Miller, L. (2009) *Increasing Business Benefits from in-House Coaching Schemes.* Brighton, Institute of Employment Studies.

Carton, G. and Ungureanu, P. (2018) Bridging the research-practice divide: A study of scholar-practitioners' multiple role management strategies and knowledge spillovers across roles. *Journal of Management Inquiry,* 27(4), pp. 436-453.

CIPD (2015) *Learning and Development.* London, CIPD.

CIPD (2011a) *The Coaching Climate.* London, CIPD.

CIPD (2011b) *Learning and Talent Development.* London, CIPD.

CIPD (2009) *Taking the Temperature of Coaching.* London, CIPD.

Clegg, S., Rhodes, C. and Kornberger, M. (2003) An overview of the business coaching industry in Australia. *OVAL Research Working Paper 03-11.* Sydney, The Australian Centre for Organizational, Vocational and Adult Learning.

Clutterbuck, D. (1998) *Learning alliances: Tapping into talent.* London, CIPD.

Clutterbuck, D. and Megginson, D. (2005) *Making Coaching Work: Creating a Coaching Culture.* London, CIPD.

Clutterbuck, D., Megginson, D. and Bajer, A. (2016) *Building and Sustaining a Coaching Culture.* London, CIPD.

Clutterbuck, D., Whitaker, C. and Lucas, M. (2013) Reflecting on Practice. *Coaching at Work,* 8(5), pp. 37-40.

Collins, K.M.T. (2010) Advanced sampling designs in mixed research. In: Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. eds. *Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research.* London, Sage, pp. 353-377.

Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. and Clutterbuck, D. (2010) *The Complete Handbook of Coaching.* London, Sage.

Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2018) *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* 3rd Ed. London, Sage.

Crotty, M. (1998) *The Foundations of Social Research.* London, Sage.

David, S., Clutterbuck, D. and Megginson, D. (2014) Goal orientation in coaching differs according to region, experience and education. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 12(2), pp. 134-145.

de Haan, E. (2008) *Relational Coaching.* Chichester, West Sussex, John Wiley & Sons.

de Haan, E., Burger, Y., Grant, A.M. and Eriksson, P. (2016) A large-scale study of executive and workplace coaching: The relative contributions of relationship, personality match, and self-efficacy. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research,* 68(3), pp. 189-207.

DiGirolamo, J.A., Rogers, G. and Heink, P.J. (2016) *A study of best practices for developing and maintaining a coaching practice or internal coaching program: A technical report.* Lexington, KY. International Coach Federation.

Dillman, D.A., Smyth, J.D. and Christian, L.M. (2014) *Internet, Phone, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys.* 4th Ed. Hoboken, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons.

Dingman, M.E. (2006) Executive coaching: What's the big deal? *International Journal of Leadership Studies,* 1(2), pp. 2-5.

Drake, D.B. (2008) Finding our way home: Coaching's search for identity in a new era. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 1(1), pp. 16-27.

Duberley, J., Johnson, P. and Cassell, C. (2012) Philosophies underpinning qualitative research. In: Symon, G. and Cassell, C eds. *Qualitative organizational research.* London, Sage, pp. 15-34.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P.R. (2015) *Management & Business Research.* 5th Ed. London, Sage.

Ebrahimi, M. and Cameron, R. (2012) Internal Coaching and Coaching Culture. In: *Australian and New Zealand Academy of Management Conference*. Perth, Australia, 5th-7th December.

Egan, G. (1994) Working *the Shadow Side*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Eland-Goossensen, M.A., Van De Goor, L.A.M., Vollemans, E.C., Hendriks, V.M. and Garretsen, H.F.L. (1997) Snowball sampling applied to opiate addicts outside the treatment system. *Addiction Research,* 5(4), pp. 317-330.

Ely, K., Boyce, L.A., Nelson, J.K., Zaccaro, S.J., Hernez-Broome, G. and Whyman, W. (2010) Evaluating Leadership Coaching: A review and integrated framework. *The Leadership Quarterly,* 21, pp. 585-599.

Faugier, J. and Sargeant, M. (1997) Sampling hard to reach populations. *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* 26, pp. 790-797.

Feehily, J. (2018) Exploring the lived Experience of Internal Coaches. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* Special Issue 12, pp. 73-84.

Feldman, D.C. and Lankau, M.J. (2005) Executive coaching: A review and Agenda for Future Research. *Journal of Management,* 31(6), pp. 829-848.

Fillery-Travis, A. and Cox, E. (2014) Researching Coaching. In: Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. and Clutterbuck, D. eds. *The Complete Handbook of Coaching.* 2nd Ed. London, Sage, pp. 445-459.

Fillery-Travis, A. and Lane, D. (2008) Research: Does coaching work? In: Palmer, S. and Whybrow, A. eds. *Handbook of Coaching Psychology.* Hove, East Sussex, Routledge, pp. 57-70.

Fillery-Travis, A. and Lane, D. (2006) Does coaching work or are we asking the wrong question? *International Coaching Psychology Review,* 1(1), pp. 24-36.

Finkelstein, M.A. (2009) Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivational orientations and the volunteer process. *Personality and Individual Differences,* 46, pp. 653-658.

Finkelstein, M.A. (2008) Predictors of volunteer time: The changing contributions of motive fulfilment and role identity. *Social Behaviour and Personality,* 36(10), pp. 1353-1364.

Frisch, M.H. (2005) Extending the reach of Executive Coaching: The Internal Coach. *Human Resource Planning,* 28(1), p. 23.

Frisch, M.H. (2001) The Emerging role of the Internal Coach. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research,* 53(4), pp. 240-250.

Frost, J. (2007) In-house coaching and mentoring. *Training Journal,* August, pp. 52-55.

Garvey, B. (2014) Neofeudalism and surveillance in coaching supervision and mentoring? *E-Organisations & People,* 21(4), pp. 41-48.

Garvey, B. (2011) *A very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Coaching and Mentoring.* London, Sage.

Garvey, R. (1999) *Mentoring in the Marketplace: Studies of learning at work.* PhD Thesis, University of Durham.

Garvey, B., Stokes, P. and Megginson, D. (2018) *Coaching and Mentoring; Theory and Practice.* 3rd ed. London, Sage.

Garvey, B., Stokes, P. and Megginson, D. (2014) *Coaching and Mentoring; Theory and Practice.* 2nd ed. London, Sage.

Garvey, R., Stokes, P. and Megginson, D. (2009) *Coaching and Mentoring: Theory and Practice.* London, Sage.

Giles, W.F. (1977) Volunteering for job enrichment: A test of expectancy theory predications. *Personnel Psychology,* 30, pp. 427-435.

Goffman, E. (1961) *Asylums.* London, Penguin.

Goffman, E. (1959) *The presentation of the self in everyday life.* London, Penguin.

Goode, W.J. (1960) A theory of Role Strain. *American Sociological Review,* 25, pp. 483-496

Gorby, C.B. (1937) Everyone gets a share of the profits. *Factory Management and Maintenance,* 95, pp. 82-83.

Gormley, H. and van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2014) Developing Coaching Cultures: A Review of the Literature. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 7(2), pp. 90-101.

Grant, A.M. (2017) The third 'generation' of workplace coaching: creating a culture of quality conversations. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 10(1), pp. 37-53.

Grant, A.M. (2012) Australian coaches' views on coaching supervision: A study with implications for Australian coach education, training and practice. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 10(2), pp. 17-33.

Grant, A.M. (2008) Past, Present and Future: The Evolution of Professional Coaching and Coaching Psychology. In: Palmer, S. and Whybrow, A. Eds. *Handbook of Coaching Psychology: A Guide for Practitioners*. Hove, East Sussex, Routledge, pp. 23-39.

Grant, A.M. (2006) Solution-focused coaching. In: Passmore, J. Ed. *Excellence in coaching: The industry guide*. London: Kogan Page, pp. 73-90.

Grant, A.M. (2001) *Towards a Psychology of Coaching.* Coaching Psychology Unit, School of Psychology, University of Sydney. [Accessed on www.researchgate.net 1st June 2019].

Grant, A.M. and Cavanagh, M.J. (2004) Toward a profession of coaching: Sixty-five years of progress and the challenges for the future. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 2(1), pp. 1-16.

Grant, A.M., Passmore, J., Cavanagh, M.J., and Parker, H. (2010) The state of play in coaching today: A comprehensive review of the field. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology,* 25, pp. 125-167.

Gray, D.E. (2014) *Doing Research in the Real World.* 3rd Ed. London, Sage.

Gray, D.E. (2011) Journeys towards the professionalisation of coaching: dilemmas, dialogues and decisions along the global pathway. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 4(1), pp. 4-19.

Gray, D.E., Garvey, B. and Lane, D.A. (2016) *A Critical Introduction to Coaching and Mentoring.* London, Sage.

Gross, N., Mason, W.S., and McEachern, A.W. (1958) *Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies in the School Superintendency Role.* New York, Wiley & Sons.

Grover, S. and Furnham, A. (2016) Coaching as a developmental intervention in organisations: A systematic review of its effectiveness and the mechanisms underlying it. *PLoS ONE,* 11(7), pp. 1-41.

Guest, G., MacQueen, K.M. and Namey, E.E. (2012) *Applied Thematic Analysis.* Thousand Oaks, California, Sage.

Guest, G., Bunce, A. and Johnson, L. (2006) How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods,* 18(1), pp. 59-82.

Hamlin, R.G., Ellinger, A.D. and Beattie, R.S. (2008) The emergent 'coaching industry': a wake-up call for HRD professionals. *Human Resource Development International,* 11(3), pp. 287-305.

Handcock, M.S. and Gile, K.J. (2011) Comment: On the concept of snowball sampling. *Sociological Methodology,* 41, pp. 367-371.

Hawkins, P. (2012) *Creating a Coaching Culture.* Maidenhead, Berkshire, Open University Press.

Hawkins, P. (2010) Coaching Supervision. In: Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. and Clutterbuck, D. eds. *The Complete Handbook of Coaching.* London, Sage, pp. 381-393.

Hawkins, P. (2008) The coaching profession: some of the key challenges. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 1(1), pp. 28-38.

Heckathorn, D.D. (2011) Comment: Snowball versus respondent-driven sampling. *Sociological Methodology,* 41, pp. 355-366.

Humphrey, S. and Dean, K. (2016) Is a coaching culture an alternative tyranny? Part 1. *Coaching at Work,* 11(1), pp. 38-41.

Hunt, J.M. and Weintraub, J.R. (2007) *The Coaching Organization: A Strategy for Developing Leaders.* Thousand Oakes, California, Sage.

ICF (2016) *2016 ICF Global Coaching Study.* Available from htpp://www.coachfederation.org/2016study [Accessed on 16th December 2016].

ICF (2013) *Organizational Coaching Study.* Lexington, Kentucky, ICF.

Jenkins, L., Passmore, J., Palmer, S. and Short, E. (2012) The nature and focus of coaching in the UK today: a UK survey report. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 5(2), pp. 132-150.

Johnson, R.B., Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Turner, L.A. (2007) Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research,* 1(2), pp. 112-133.

Jones, R.J., Woods, S.A. and Guillaume, Y.R.F. (2016) The effectiveness of workplace coaching: A meta-analysis of learning and performance outcomes from coaching. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 89, pp. 249-277.

Jones, R.J., Woods, S.A. and Zhou, Y. (2018) Boundary conditions of workplace coaching outcomes. *Journal of Management Psychology,* 33(7/8), pp. 475-496.

Joo, B. (2005) Executive coaching: A conceptual framework from an integrative review of practice and research. *Human Resource Development Review,* 4(4), pp. 462-488.

Kahn, R.L., Wolfe, D.M., Quinn, R.P., Snoek, J. and Rosenthal, R.A. (1964) *Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity.* New York, Wiley.

Katz, D. and Kahn, R.L. (1978) *The Social Psychology of Organizations.* 2nd ed. New York, John Wiley & Sons.

Kauffman, C.M., Russell, S.G. and Bush, M.W. eds. (2008) *100 Coaching Research Proposal Abstracts.* The Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative, McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School and The Foundation of Coaching, International Coaching Research Forum, Cambridge, MA. Available from www.instituteofcoaching.org. [Accessed on 26th September 2019].

Keddy, J. and Johnson, C (2011) *Managing coaching at work.* London, Kogan Page.

Kilburg, R.R. (2000) *Executive Coaching: Developing Managerial Wisdom in a World of Chaos.* Washington, DC, American Psychological Association.

Klasen, N. and Clutterbuck, D. (2002) *Implementing Mentoring Schemes: A practical guide to successful programs.* Oxford, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.

Knights, A. and Poppleton, A. (2008) *Developing Coaching Capability in Organisations.* London, CIPD.

Kram, K.E. (1985) *Mentoring at Work*. Glenview, Ill, Scott Foresman.

Lane, D.A. (2010) Coaching in the UK - an introduction to some of the key debates. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 3(2), pp. 155-166.

Lane, D.A., Stelter, R. and Stout Rostron, S. (2010) The Future of Coaching as a Profession. In: Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. and Clutterbuck, D. eds. *The Complete Handbook of Coaching.* London, Sage, pp. 357-368.

Lee, G. (2003) *Leadership Coaching.* London, CIPD.

Leonard-Cross, E. (2010) Developmental coaching: Business benefit – fact or fad? An evaluative study to explore the impact of coaching in the workplace. *International Coaching Psychology Review,* 5(1), pp. 36-47.

Levinson, D.J., Darrow, C.N., Klein, E.B., Levinson, M.H. and McKee, B. (1978) *The Seasons of a Man's Life.* New York, Random House.

Linley, P.A. (2006) Coaching Research: who? what? where? when? why? *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 4(2), pp. 1-7.

Machin, S. (2010) The nature of the internal coaching relationship. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* Special Issue No. 4, pp. 37-52.

Marks, S.R. (1977) Multiple roles and role strain: Some notes on human energy, time and commitment. *American Sociological Review,* 42(December), pp. 921-936.

Mason, J. (2018) *Qualitative researching.* 3rd Ed. London, Sage.

Maxwell, A. (2011) Supervising the Internal Coach. In: Bachkirova, T., Jackson, P. and Clutterbuck, D. eds. *Coaching and Mentoring Supervision: Theory and Practice.* Maidenhead: Open University Press, pp. 183-195.

McComb, C. (2012a) Developing Coaching Culture: Are your managers motivated coaches? (part 1). *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 44(2), pp. 90-93.

McComb, C. (2012b) Developing Coaching Culture: Are your managers good coachees? *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 44(6), pp. 345-348.

McGurk, J. (2012) *Coaching: The Evidence Base.* UK, CIPD.

McKee, A., Tilin, F. and Mason, D. (2009) Coaching from the inside: Building an internal group of emotionally intelligent coaches. *International Coaching Psychology Review,* 4(1), pp. 59-70.

Merton, R.K. (1957) The role-set: Problems in sociological theory. *British Journal of Sociology,* 8, pp. 106-120.

Mihiotis, A. and Argirou, N. (2016) Coaching: From challenge to opportunity. *Journal of Management Development,* 35(4), pp. 448-463.

Mink, O.G., Owen, K.Q. and Mink, B.P. (1993) *Developing high-performance people: The art of coaching.* Reading, MA, Addison-Wesley Publishing.

Moreno-Jimenez, M.P. and Villodres, M.C.H. (2010) Prediction of burnout in volunteers. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology,* 40(7), pp. 1798-1818.

Mukherjee, S. (2012) Does coaching transform coaches? A case study of internal coaching. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 10(2), pp. 76-87.

Mullen, E.J. (1994) Framing the mentoring relationship as an information exchange. *Human Resource Management Review,* 4(3), pp. 257-281.

Mullen, E.J. and Noe, R.A. (1999) The mentoring information exchange: when do mentors seek information from their proteges? *Journal of Organizational Behavior,* 20, pp. 233-242

Mullins, L.J. (2016) *Management and Organisational Behaviour.* 11th ed. Harlow, England, Pearson.

Newby, T.J. and Heide, A. (1992) The value of mentoring. *Performance Improvement Quarterly,* 5(4), pp. 2-15.

Nordenmark, M. (2004) Multiple Social Roles and Well-being: A longitudinal test of the role stress theory and the role expansion theory. *Acta Sociologica,* 47(2), pp. 115-126.

Onwuegbuzie, A.J. and Leech, N.L. (2007) Sampling designs in qualitative research: Making the sampling process more public. *The Qualitative Report,* 12(2), pp. 238-254.

Orenstein, R.L. (2002) Executive coaching: It's not just about the executive. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science,* 38(3), pp. 355-374.

Orly, M. (2008) Mentoring mentors as a tool for personal and professional empowerment in teacher education. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 6(1), pp. 1-18.

Örtqvist, D. and Wincent, J. (2006) Prominent consequences of role stress: A meta-analytic review. *International Journal of Stress Management,* 13(4), pp. 399-422.

Parsloe, E. (1992) *Coaching, mentoring and assessing: A practical guide to developing competence.* New York, Kogan Page.

Passmore, J. and Fillery-Travis, A. (2011) A critical review of executive coaching research: a decade of progress and what's to come. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 4(2), pp. 70-88.

Phillips, L.C. and Phillips, M.H. (2010) Volunteer motivation and reward preference: An empirical study of volunteerism in a large, not-for-profit organization. *SAM Advanced Management Journal, Autumn*, pp. 12-19.

Ragins, B.R. and Kram, K.E. (2007) The Roots and Meaning of Mentoring. In: Ragins, B.R. and Kram, K.E. eds. *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, Research and Practice*. Thousand Island, CA, Sage, pp. 3-15.

Ragins, B.R. and Scandura, T.A. (1999) Burden or Blessing? Expected costs and benefits of being a mentor. *Journal of Organizational Behavior,* 20, pp. 493-509.

Richardson, P. (2004) *The life coach: Become the person you've always wanted to be.* London, Hamlyn.

Ridler Report (2016) *Strategic Trends in the use of Executive Coaching.* London, Ridler & Co.

Ridler Report (2013) *Trends in the use of Executive Coaching.* London, Ridler & Co.

Ridler Report (2011) *Trends in the use of Executive Coaching.* London, Ridler & Co.

Ridler Report (2009) *Trends in the use of Executive Coaching.* London, Ridler & Co.

Ridler Report (2008) *A Survey of Trends in Buying Executive Coaching.* London, Ridler & Co.

Robson, M. (2016) An ethnographic Study of the introduction of Internal Supervisors to an Internal Coaching Scheme. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring,* 14(2), pp. 106-122.

Rock, D. and Donde, R. (2008a) Driving Organizational change with internal coaching programmes: part one. *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 40(1), pp. 10-18.

Rock, D. and Donde, R. (2008b) Driving organizational change with internal coaching programmes: part two. *Industrial and Commercial Training,* 40(2), pp. 75-80.

Roulston, K. (2010) *Reflective interviewing: A guide to theory and practice.* London, Sage.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012) *Research methods for business students.* 6th Ed. Harlow, Pearson Education.

Saunders, M.N.K. and Townsend, K. (2016) Reporting and justifying the number of interview participants in organization and workplace research. *British Journal of Management,* 27, pp. 836-852.

Schalk, M. and Landeta, J. (2017) Internal versus external executive coaching. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 10(2), pp. 140-156.

Sherman, S. and Freas, A. (2004) The Wild West of executive coaching. *Harvard Business Review,* 82(11), pp. 82-90.

Sherpa Executive coaching survey (2016) Sherpa 2016: coaching credibility at 'record high'. *Coaching at Work,* 11(3), p. 7.

Sieber, S.D. (1974) *Toward a theory of Role Accumulation.* American Sociological Review, 39 (August), pp. 567-578.

St John-Brooks, K. (2014) *Internal Coaching: The Inside Story.* London, Karnac Books.

St John-Brooks, K. (2010) What are the ethical challenges involved in being an internal coach? *International Journal of Coaching and Mentoring,* 8(1), pp. 48-64.

St John-Brooks, K. (2009) *"What are the Ethical Challenges Involved in being an Internal Coach?"* MA dissertation, Middlesex University.

Stern, L. and Stout-Rostron, S. (2013) What progress has been made in coaching research in relation to 16 ICRF focus areas from 2008 to 2012? *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice,* 6(1), pp. 72-96.

Stober, D.R. (2010) Continuing Professional Development for Coaches. In: Cox, E., Bachkirova, T. and Clutterbuck, D. eds. *The Complete Handbook of Coaching.* London, Sage, pp. 405-416.

Storey, M.A. (2003) Bringing head and heart to coaching. *Organizational Development Journal, 21(2), pp. 77-81.*

Strumpf, C. (2002) Coaching from the inside. In: Fitzgerald, C. and Garvey Berger, J. eds. *Executive Coaching: Practices & Perspectives.* Palo Alto, CA, Davies-Black Publishing, pp. 225-242.

Sudman, S. and Kalton, G. (1986) New developments in the sampling of special populations. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 12, pp. 401-429.

Theeboom, T., Beersma, B. and van Vianen, A.E.M. (2014) Does coaching work? A meta-analysis on the effects of coaching on individual level outcomes in an organisational context, *The Journal of Positive Psychology,* 9(1), pp. 1-18.

Tompkins, M.W. (2018) Coaching in the workplace. *Journal of Practical Consulting,* 6(1), pp. 115-122.

Van de Vliert, E. (1981) A three-step theory of role conflict resolution. *The journal of Social Psychology,* 113, pp. 77-83.

Van Emmerik, H., Baugh, S.G. and Euwema, M.C. (2005) Who wants to be a mentor? An examination of attitudinal, instrumental, and social motivational components. *Career Development International,* 10(4), pp. 310-324.

Welch, S. (1975) Sampling by referral in a dispersed population. *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 39, pp. 237-246.

Wengraf, T. (2001) *Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London, Sage.

Western, S. (2012) *Coaching and Mentoring: A Critical Text.* London, Sage.

Whitmore, J. (2002) *Coaching for Performance.* 3rd ed. London, Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Wickham, M. and Parker, M. (2007) Reconceptualising organisational role theory for contemporary organisational contexts. *Journal of Management Psychology,* 22(5), pp. 440-464.

Wilson, C. (2011) Developing a Coaching Culture. *Industrial and Commercial Training, 43(7), pp. 407-414*

Wilson, S. (2008) True Dilemmas! *Coaching at Work,* 3(3).

Woodley, X.M. and Lockard, M. (2016) Womanism and snowball sampling: Engaging marginalized populations in holistic research. *The Qualitative Report,* 21(2), pp. 321-329.

Zeus, P. and Skiffington, S. (2000) *The Complete Guide to Coaching at Work.* Sydney, McGraw-Hill.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – On-line survey questionnaire

My Perception of 'being' an internal coach

Purpose of the research

This questionnaire is part of a PhD research project being conducted by Mark Robson (mark.robson@yorksj.ac.uk) at York St John University. I am an internal coach within a European manufacturing organisation, and a PhD student. My PhD research relates to how employees are able to 'be' internal coaches within their organisational context. As part of that research this survey seeks to understand how internal coaches perceive their status as coaches within their organisational context. Please note that I am not seeking to evaluate participants coaching practice, but seeking to understand participants perspective on 'being' an internal coach.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire, but would rather seek independent advice you are welcome to contact my supervisor at York St John University, Dr George Boak (g.boak@yorksj.ac.uk). This research has been submitted to, and received ethical approval from the University's Research Ethics Committee. I confirm that all data collected from individual survey respondents will be kept confidential, including from your organisation or employer, and will only be published, for example in my PhD thesis, academic paper, or summary provided to participants who wish to see it, in aggregated, anonymous form.

1

York St John University

My Perception of 'being' an internal coach

Instructions

The questionnaire is structured in two parts. In section 1 please answer the ten questions aimed at establishing the nature and extent of your coaching practice. Please select one answer to each question from the drop down menu, or, if none of the answers available are appropriate provide your own answer in the box provided. Section 2 comprises thirty six statements. For each statement please select the option that best represents your opinion of the statement; whether you agree with it, strongly disagree with it, etc. Please select only one response to each statement. Please answer all questions, and record your opinion of all statements.

York St John University

My Perception of 'being' an internal coach

Section 1

For the purposes of this research, an internal coach is defined as someone who 1) is recognised as a coach within their organisation, 2) works with coachees drawn from their organisation (but working in a different chain of command), 3) coaching is additional to, and separate from their 'day job', and 4) coaching is not their main role in the organisation.

* 1. Does this definition describe your coaching role?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

York St John University

My Perception of 'being' an internal coach

2. What was the nature of your training to become a coach?

Other (please specify)

3. Do you hold a coaching qualification?

Other (please specify)

4. Do you hold a coaching accreditation?

Other (please specify)

5. For how long have you been a coach?

6. As an internal coach how many hours do you spend coaching each month, on average?

7. As part of your practice as an internal coach, do you have supervision?

8. Which description below best describes your position within your organisation?

9. What were your reasons for becoming an internal coach?

10. Has being an internal coach fulfilled your reasons for wanting to become a coach?

5

York St John University

My Perception of 'being' an internal coach

Section 2

11. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My line manager enables me to take the time I need away from my day-job to coach.	○	○	○	○	○

12. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
If I need to I will reduce the amount of coaching I do (if I have other priorities etc.)	○	○	○	○	○

13. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Feedback tells me that I am making a difference as a coach.	○	○	○	○	○

14. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Colleagues value my work as a coach.	○	○	○	○	○

15. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I feel able to take on any coaching assignment requested by my organisation	○	○	○	○	○

16. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
There are no support mechanisms in place to help me cope with any difficulties I face as a coach.	○	○	○	○	○

17. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I have the freedom to plan my coaching around my day-job	○	○	○	○	○

18. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Being a coach has not improved my performance in my day-job.	○	○	○	○	○

19. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My line manager trusts me to balance my coaching with my day-job.	○	○	○	○	○

20. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Coaching has given me new business skills.	○	○	○	○	○

21. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My line manager would rather I wasn't an internal coach	○	○	○	○	○

22. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My coaching has made a positive contribution to colleagues' development.	○	○	○	○	○

23. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Coaching has not helped my career.	○	○	○	○	○

24. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My role as a coach is an important part of my work life.	○	○	○	○	○

25. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly agree
Coaching has increased my visibility in the organisation	○	○	○	○	○

26. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I feel confident about my capability as a coach.	○	○	○	○	○

27. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My line manager does not restrict my coaching activity.	○	○	○	○	○

28. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Being an internal coach is not as rewarding as I expected it to be.	○	○	○	○	○

29. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My coachees appreciate the time we spend together.	○	○	○	○	○

30. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Internal coaches are acknowledged to be a key part of my organisation's people development strategy.	○	○	○	○	○

31. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I will find a way to keep coaching because it is important to me.	○	○	○	○	○

32. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Some internal coaching assignments are beyond my abilities, and should be carried out by an external coach.	○	○	○	○	○

33. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I have no evidence that my coaching makes a positive impact.	○	○	○	○	○

34. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I believe that important business activities that require coaching support are assigned to external coaches.	○	○	○	○	○

35. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I can never be as skilled as an external coach.	○	○	○	○	○

36. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
The contribution my coaching practice makes to the success of the organisation is recognised when my performance is reviewed by my manager.	○	○	○	○	○

37. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I use the skills I've developed as a coach to improve my working relationships.	○	○	○	○	○

38. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I can talk to a coach supervisor, or peer coach to resolve my coaching dilemmas.	○	○	○	○	○

39. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I am encouraged to take part in development activities aimed at improving my coaching practice.	○	○	○	○	○

40. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I have to limit the coaching I do to avoid conflict with my day-job.	○	○	○	○	○

41. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Colleagues acknowledge that coaching is part of my role in the organisation.	○	○	○	○	○

42. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
My line manager isn't interested in my role as a coach.	○	○	○	○	○

43. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I find it difficult to get permission to do coaching activities sometimes.	○	○	○	○	○

44. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I find coaching very fulfilling.	○	○	○	○	○

45. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
I have as much to offer a coachee as an external coach.	○	○	○	○	○

46. Please indicate to what degree you agree or disagree with the statement below

	I strongly agree	I agree	I'm not sure	I disagree	I strongly disagree
Being an internal coach is not worth the effort.	○	○	○	○	○

47. Today, what are your reflections on 'being' an internal coach in your organisational context? Please use the the comment box below to share these, thank you.

12

York St John University

My Perception of 'being' an internal coach

Thank you

Thank you for taking part in my research, your support is appreciated.

48. Would you be willing to be contacted in connection with this research?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Please provide your e-mail address if you would be willing to be contacted in connection with this research.

49. If you would like to receive a copy of the report, please provide your e-mail address

Email Address

Thank you for your time.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me on my e-mail – mark.robson@yorksj.ac.uk

Regards,

Mark Robson

Appendix 2 – Example of gatekeeper communication to their network: EMCC International research spotlight, published 3rd November 2016

International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching

Dear Mark

EMCC International is supporting research being undertaken by Mark Robson (a senior manager and an internal coach) who is studying for a PhD at York St John University in the UK. As part of his doctoral research project, Mark is seeking information from 'internal coaches' i.e. people who undertake coaching activities within their own organisation.

Whilst there is an ever growing body of literature on the coaching relationship, process and outcomes, there has been little systematic research into internal coaching. Mark's research seeks to understand how internal coaches perceive their status as coaches within their organisational context. He would like coaches to complete an on-line questionnaire via the web link below, which will take 15 to 20 minutes. Respondents can complete the questionnaire with complete anonymity, both for themselves individually, and for their organisation.

The closing date for responding to the research is 30 November 2016. Please pass this email on to colleagues who may also be able to participate in the research.

GO TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix 3 – Comparison tables of the composition of the survey sample and interview sample

Composition of samples based upon length of service as an internal coach

How long have you been a coach? (excludes those <1 year)	Survey sample	Interview sample
1-2 years	34%	30%
3-5 years	39%	50%
6-10 years	19%	15%
>10 years	8%	5%

Composition of samples based upon time spent coaching each month

How much time do you spend coaching each month?	Survey sample	Interview sample
1-2 hours	39%	55%
3-5 hours	39%	35%
6-10 hours	14%	10%
11-20 hours	6%	0%
>20 hours	2%	0%

Composition of samples based upon frequency of supervision per year

How many times do you have supervision each year?	Survey sample	Interview sample
None	16%	15%
1 per year	9%	20%
2-3 per year	49%	25%
4 or more per year	26%	40%

Composition of samples based upon role in organisation

Which best describes your role in the organisation	Survey sample	Interview sample
Employee	11%	5%
Supervisor/Team Leader	7%	0%
Manager	39%	50%
Senior Manager/Director	43%	45%

Appendix 4 – Interview participant recruitment letter

E-mail Title: Request for further support of my PhD research project on Internal Coaches' experiences

*Dear [name, if known based upon e-mail address *],*

Thank you for taking part in the first phase of my PhD research looking at internal coaches' experience of being a coach by completing the on-line survey questionnaire at the end of last year, and, for indicating your willingness at that time to take part in further research. Over 400 internal coaches participated in the survey. I am now seeking to interview a smaller number of internal coaches to explore some experiences in more detail. I would be very grateful if you would take part again in my research and set out below what would be involved.

*The research will involve a one-to-one interview, lasting approximately 1 hour. The time and location of the interview will be set to fit in with your needs and availability. If your preference is that the interview take place at your place of work, please ensure that you have permission from your employer for this to happen. I would like to conduct the interview face-to-face, but if logistics or your preference means this is not possible then the interview could be conducted by telephone. With your permission I would record the interview to allow me to listen to you more fully during our conversation, and, to be able to conduct analysis of our conversation later. I stress that the content of our conversation will at all times be treated as confidential, and protected accordingly, and, that you will never be identified with any statement you make during the interview. My research has been given ethical approval by York St John University's research ethics committee, and if you have any questions regarding the research I am conducting you are welcome to contact my university supervisor, Dr George Boak (*g.boak@yorksj.ac.uk*).*

It would be very helpful for me if you could let me know by DAY/MONTH whether you are willing to be interviewed. If you are, I would then arrange a brief telephone call to make the arrangements for the interview, and to answer any questions you might have. I can be contacted on 07798727873, or, if you provide a contact number I would be happy to call you.

I really appreciate your support, thank you.

Kind regards,

Mark Robson

** If name not known – "I apologise that I cannot address you by name as I only have your e-mail address"*

Appendix 5 – Themes identified, and associated statements developed from motivation to mentor research

I add value as an internal coach

1. My coaching has made a positive contribution to colleagues' development.
2. My coachees appreciate the time we spend together.
3. Colleagues value my work as a coach.
4. Feedback tells me that I am making a difference as a coach.
5. I have no evidence that my coaching makes a positive impact.

My contribution as a coach is recognised by my organisation

6. Colleagues acknowledge that coaching is part of my role in the organisation.
7. The contribution my coaching practice makes to the success of the organisation is recognised when my performance is reviewed by my manager.
8. My line manager isn't interested in my role as a coach.
9. Internal coaches are acknowledged to be a key part of my organisation's people development strategy.
10. I believe that important business activities that require coaching support are assigned to external coaches.

I am supported by my organisation in my coaching

11. My line manager enables me to take the time I need away from my day-job to coach.
12. I am encouraged to take part in development activities aimed at improving my coaching practice.
13. There are no support mechanisms in place to help me cope with any difficulties I face as a coach.
14. I can talk to a coach supervisor, or peer coach to resolve my coaching dilemmas.
15. My line manager would rather I wasn't an internal coach

I am confident in my capability as a coach

16. I can never be as skilled as an external coach.
17. I feel able to take on any coaching assignment requested by my organisation.
18. I have as much to offer a coachee as an external coach.
19. Some internal coaching assignments are beyond my abilities, and should be carried out by an external coach.
20. I feel confident about my capability as a coach.

My career benefits from my being a coach

21. I use the skills I've developed as a coach to improve my working relationships.
22. Coaching has given me new business skills.
23. Coaching has not helped my career.
24. Being a coach has not improved my performance in my day-job.
25. Coaching has increased my visibility in the organisation.

I have freedom to manage my coaching alongside my day-job

26. I have the freedom to plan my coaching around my day-job
27. I have to limit the coaching I do to avoid conflict with my day-job.
28. I find it difficult to get permission to do coaching activities sometimes.
29. My line manager trusts me to balance my coaching with my day-job.
30. My line manager does not restrict my coaching activity.

How I feel about 'being' a coach

31. My role as a coach is an important part of my work life.
32. I find coaching very fulfilling.
33. I will reduce the amount of coaching I do as I have other priorities
34. Being an internal coach is not as rewarding as I expected it to be.
35. Being an internal coach is not worth the effort.
36. I will find a way to keep coaching because it is important to me.

Appendix 6 – The interviewees

Internal coach [6]	Organisation	Coaching experience[7] (yrs)	Coaching workload [8](hrs/mth)	Interview date	Interview duration (min)
Janet Crosier	Private – A	6-10	3-5	24/7/17	63
Julie Foster	Private – A	3-5	1-2	15/8/17	56
Anthony Bennett	Private – A	3-5	1-2	17/8/17	53
Steve Dodds	Private – B	>10	1-2	24/8/17	73
Shirley Atkins	Private – C	3-5	3-5	30/8/17	46
Phil Green	Private – C	1-2	3-5	4/9/17	52
Elliot Davies	Private – C	3-5	3-5	4/9/17	36
Jim Rhodes	Private – A	6-10	1-2	13/9/17	63
Maddie Williams	Public – D	1-2	1-2	28/9/17	63
John Barnes	Not-for-profit – E	1-2	1-2	29/9/17	54
Lynn Smith	Private – A	3-5	1-2	10/10/17	37
Geoff Phillips	Public – F	3-5	3-5	26/10/17	62
Joy Pendle	Public – F	3-5	3-5	30/10/17	56
Gillian Black	Public – G	6-10	6-10	31/10/17	44
Lucy Moore	Public – F	3-5	1-2	3/11/17	59
Paul Lewis	Public – D	1-2	1-2	13/11/17	42
Rupert Brookes	Public – H	1-2	1-2	30/11/17	61
Jo Jenkes	Not-for-profit – E	3-5	6-10	15/1/18	64
Bill Smith	Public – I	3-5	3-5	16/2/18	56
Jenny Farthing	Public – I	1-2	1-2	16/2/18	56

[6] The names of all interviewees have been changed

[7] Coaching experience is based upon the coach's survey submission. Therefore, at the time of interview each coach had an additional year of coaching experience.

[8] Coaching workload is based upon the coach's survey submission.

Appendix 7 – Interview guide

1. To begin, would you share with me the story of how you became an internal coach?
2. Where does the internal coach role fit into your work life today?
3. You are a part-time coach with a full-time day-job, how do you experience balancing these two roles?
4. How would you describe the effect, or impact that being an internal coach has had upon you? Has becoming a coach changed you?
5. What is your experience of different stakeholder attitudes towards you as an internal coach?
6. How do you feel the contribution your coaching makes to the organisation is recognised?
7. What is your perception of the support you receive to enable you to be a coach?
8. How does the wider coaching community, or coaching industry impact upon you as an internal coach?
9. What has being an internal coach come to mean to you?
10. If someone approached you and said that they were considering becoming an internal coach what questions would you get them to think about?
11. I wonder, what is it, do you think, that keeps you coaching?
12. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of being an internal coach that my questions haven't enabled you to bring out?

Appendix 8 – Interviewee consent form

York Business School
York St John University, Lord Mayor's Walk, York, YO31 7EX
Email: mark.robson@yorksj.ac.uk
Phone: 07798727873

Interview to explore the experience of being an internal coach

CONSENT FORM

		Please initial box
1.	I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask questions about participating in the research and have these answered satisfactorily.	☐
2.	i) I understand that the research conversation will be recorded through written notes and/or audio. The recording will be transcribed for analysis and both the recording and the transcription document will be confidentially disposed of once the project is complete.	☐
	ii) I understand that extracts from the transcriptions may be used in papers for publication in peer-review journals, conference presentation reports or training materials. I have had the opportunity to discuss the implications of publication and I am satisfied that my confidentiality and identity will be appropriately safe-guarded.	☐
3.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason by e-mailing the researcher giving either my name or participant ID. I accept that material can not be withdrawn once it has been published as outlined above.	☐
4.	I understand that relevant data collected during the study may be seen by supervisors of the research study at York St John University.	☐
5.	I agree to take part in this study.	☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of researcher/witness	Date	Signature

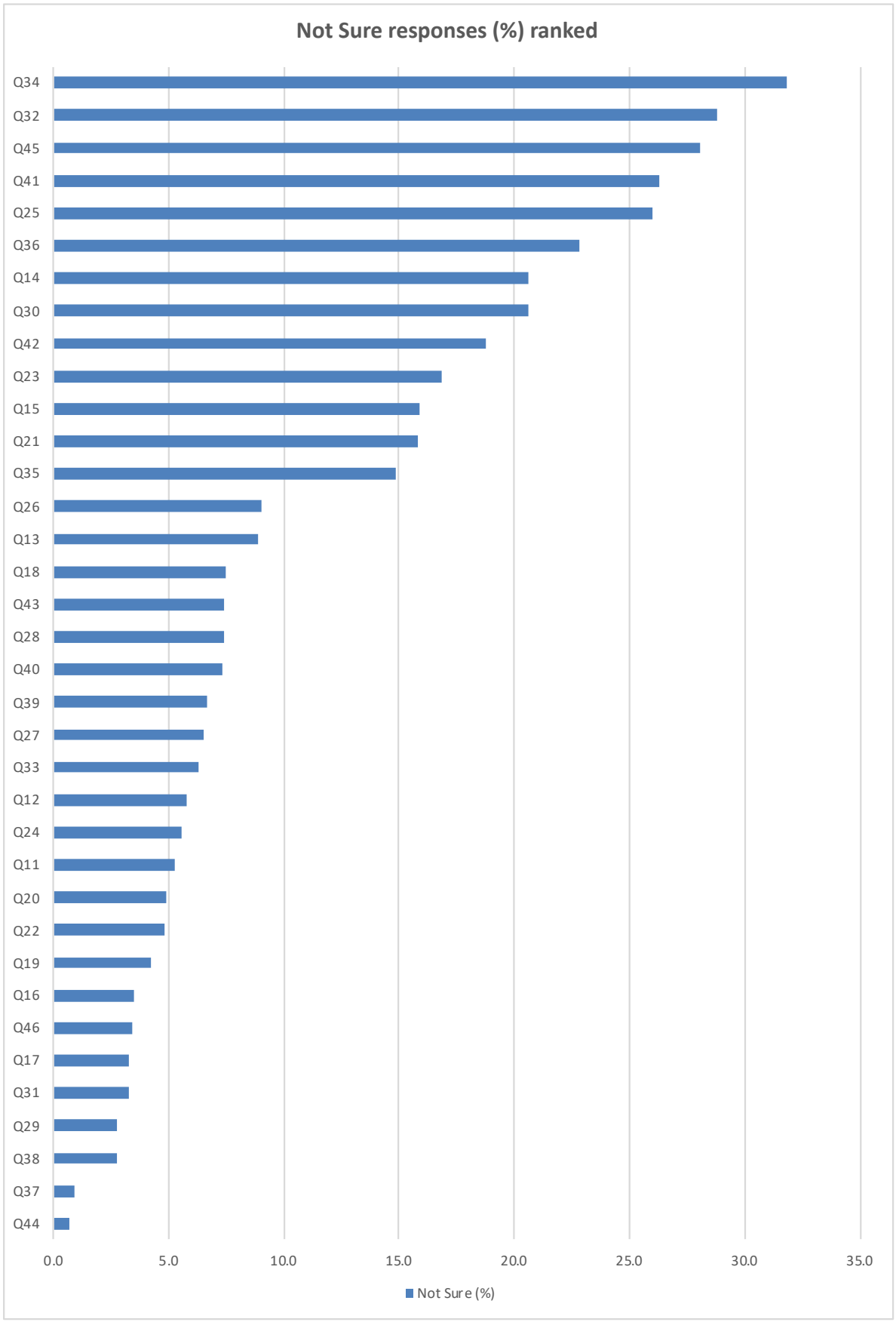
Appendix 9 – Code book (part) used to code responses to Q9 of the on-line questionnaire: What were your reasons for becoming an internal coach?

Code	description	Full definition	When to use	When not to use
PRECEE	Previous experience as coachee	Has previously experienced a coaching relationship as a coachee.The experience has had a positive, lasting effect. Based upon that coachee experience has decided to become a coach.	When the person links their experience of being coached with their decision to become a coach.	If person mentions that they have experienced being coached, but they do not link this to their decision to become a coach.
COMPCAP	Complementary existing style, values or skills	Believes that has skills, values, behaviours and/or experiences, based upon current or previous roles that are complemenary to the skills of a coach. The complementarity of skills and/or values is what makes it appropriate to become a coach.	When the person specifically links existing skills, management style or personal values, developed in an existing or previous role, to coaching.	When skills are specifically linked to having been a coach, or having related training (eg counsellor), or being a coachee - consider using **PREC** or **PRECEE.**
PREC	Previous experience as coach (or mentor or counsellor)	Has already acted as a coach (or mentor, or counsellor), or had training as a coach. This could have been in a previous organisation, or as an external coach. Wanted to bring this prior experience to the role of internal coach.	When indicate that have previously either acted as a coach, or been asked to do so, and as a result formed an opinion about coaching. Could also have been a mentor, or councillor.	If no apparent connection between previous experience of coaching and desire to become an internal coach now.
SBELIEF	Believe in coaching	Has a strong belief that coaching works, that coaching is the right approach to use. Act of faith.	Talk of finding vocation, calling. Delivers return on investment	If based on own experience consider using one of **'PRE'** or **'COMP** codes.
SDEV	To learn, develop skills, formalise skills	Becoming a coach will either enable the person to learn and develop new skills, or formalise skills previously used in an informal way. Seen as a way of developing self.	Use when person links motivation to become a coach with the acquisition of skills, or techniques. That is, for their personal development.	When person focuses upon management or leadership consider using **SLEAD**. Check to differentiate personal development as relating to the person them self versus personal development meaning 'others'. In these instances use **COLDEV**
SLEAD	Improve as manager/leader	Person sees becoming a coach, and the new skills learned or developed as a result, will develop and improve them as a manager or leader.	When person talks specifically about enhancing role as a manager or leader; greater understanding of, or learning about people.	When person links role enhancement to learning new coaching skills, or acquiring new tools consider using **SDEV**.
SGRAT	Personal gratification	Gets pleasure from seeing the effect their coaching has on coachees. Enjoys coaching as something distinct from their day-job. Enjoy working with people.	When talks of getting pleasure or satisfaction from coaching. Coaching adds to the persons pleasure beyond their day job.	When linked to personal development or tangible benefit.
SQUAL	Gain qualifications	Sees becoming a coach as a way to gain formal qualifications, or, recognision.	Gaining qualitications or accreditation. If indicate able to build up coaching time to support professional body accreditation. Increased recognition	If specifically linked to coaching outside organisation consider using **SBEYOND.** If linked specifically to career enhancement use **SCAREER.**
SCAREER	Enhance career	Sees coaching as a way to advance their career, or improve their CV.	When explicitly links becoming a coach to career	
SNET	Increase network	Sees coaching as a way to develop or increase their network within the organisation. A means of being more visible withn the organisation.	When person indicates interest in connecting with other people within the organisation	When linked to organisation rather that people, consider using **SVIS**
SVIS	Increase visibility of organisation	Increase personal visibility and knowledge of the wider organisation	When the person indicates interest in developing their knowledge of their organisation	When linked to people rather than organisaton, consider using **SNET**
SINFL	Increase influence	Increase their influence, whether of colleagues, or on the organisation's direction or culture.	When contact with others, relationships, are sought to specifically bring about change that the person desires	If not linked specifically to influencing, creating change, then consider using **SNET** or **SVIS**
SPER	Use in personal life	Believe that the skills they gain as a coach can be used, and be of help in their personal life. This could include the way they interact with their children.	When link made to using coaching in non-work environment such as family, children or friends	If linked specifically to coaching as a job, or role outside work consider using **SBEYOND**
SCUR	Curiosity, intellectual challenge	Curious to understand more about coaching and what it might offer. Might talk about looking for an approach to do something, or seeking a way to achieve something. Might see learning to be a coach as an intellectual challenge.	When talk of personal interest, or wanting to understand more about coaching. Wanting to understand about coaching's impact. Use works like 'looking for' or 'seeking way to'. Talking about possible way forward.	If talks about 'doing', 'achieving', then consider using a development code - **COLDEV** or or **ORGPERF**
SBEYOND	Coaching beyond current organisation	See coaching as potentially giving them a future outside their current role or organisation. A possible means of leaving their current role, or a means of developing interests beyond the organisation. Something to consider doing on retirement.	Use when person indicates coaching assignments beyond own organisation. Paid or voluntary.	When associated with adding to or strengthening CV consider using **SCAREER.**

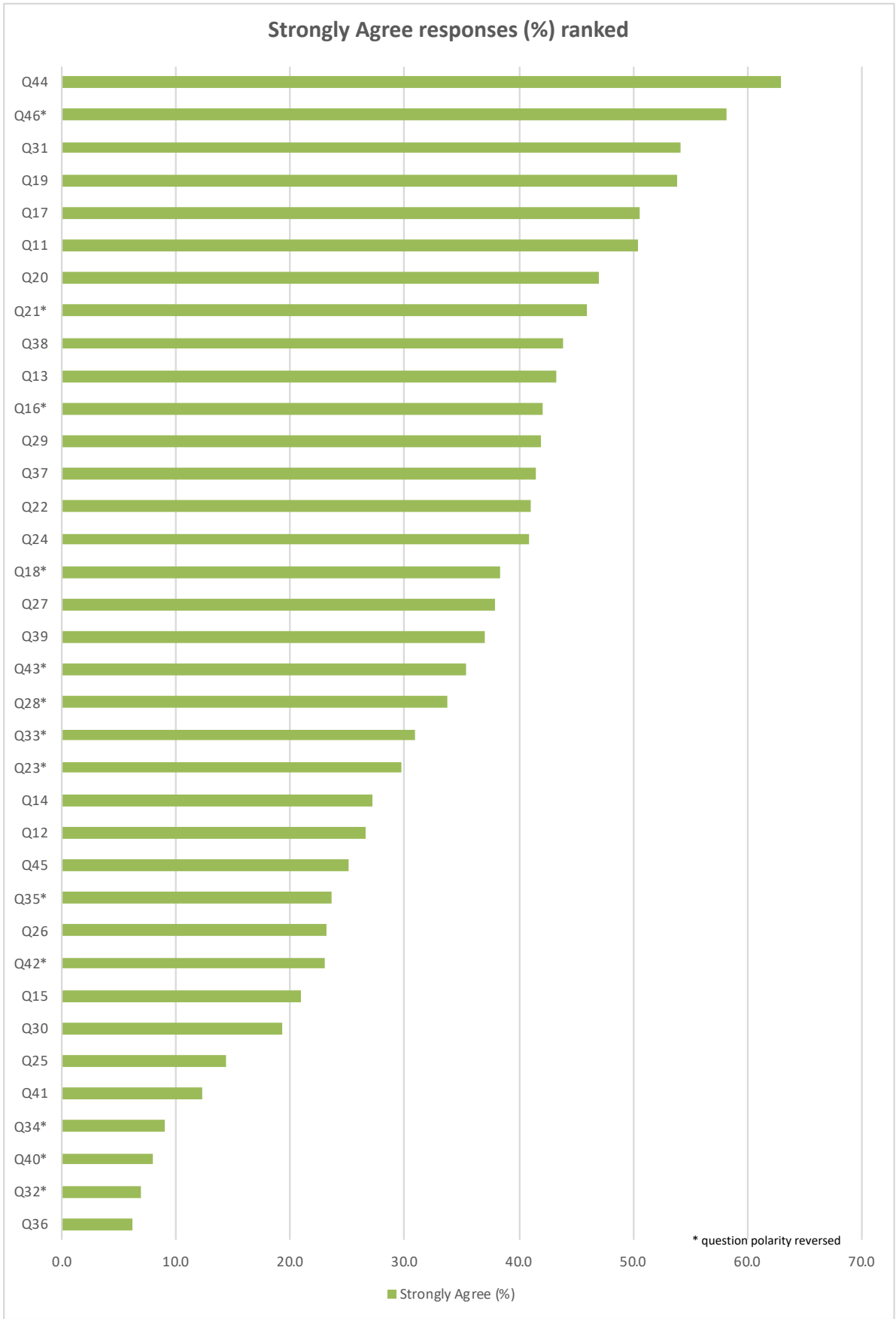
Appendix 10 - Summary of responses to the 36 statements

Q#	Question	Strongly agree (n=)	Agree (n=)	Not Sure (n=)	Disagree (n=)	Strongly disagree (n=)	Total	Weighted average	Standard deviation
Q11	My line manage enables me to take the time I need away from my day-job to coach	221	171	23	18	5	438	4.34	0.84
Q12	If I need to I will reduce the amount of coaching I do (if I have other priorities etc.)	114	228	25	58	5	430	2.10	0.98
Q13	Feedback tells me I am making a difference as a coach	180	197	37	1	1	416	4.33	0.67
Q14	Colleague value my work as a coach	115	212	87	7	1	422	4.03	0.75
Q15	I feel able to take on any coaching assignment requested by my organisation	87	221	66	39	2	415	3.85	0.87
Q16	There are no support mechanisms in place to help me cope with any difficulties I face as a coach	12	36	15	184	179	426	4.13	1.01
Q17	I have the freedom to plan my coaching around my day-job	214	176	14	16	3	423	4.38	0.78
Q18	Being a coach has not improved my performance in my day-job	9	19	32	203	164	427	4.16	0.90
Q19	My line manager trusts me to balance my coaching with my day-job	230	165	18	11	3	427	4.42	0.75
Q20	Coaching has given me new business skills	200	199	21	5	1	426	4.39	0.66
Q21	My line manager would rather I wasn't an internal coach	4	23	67	135	195	424	4.17	0.94
Q22	My coaching has made a positive contribution to colleagues' development	178	234	21	0	1	434	4.35	0.59
Q23	Coaching has not helped my career	11	53	72	165	127	428	3.80	1.07
Q24	My role as a coach is an important part of my work life	176	220	24	8	3	431	4.29	0.72
Q25	Coaching has increased my visibility in the organisation	62	184	112	67	6	431	3.53	0.96
Q26	I feel confident about my capability as a coach	100	290	39	4	0	433	4.12	0.59
Q27	My line manager does not restrict my coaching activity	162	206	28	29	3	428	4.16	0.87
Q28	Being an internal coach is not as rewarding as I expected it to be	5	31	32	219	146	433	4.09	0.89
Q29	My coachees appreciate the time we spend together	180	237	12	0	0	429	4.39	0.54
Q30	Inernal coaches are acknowledged to be a key part of my organisation's people development strategy	83	180	89	63	17	432	3.58	1.08
Q31	I will find way to keep coaching because it is important to me	231	182	14	0	0	427	4.51	0.56
Q32	Some internal coaching assignments are beyond my capabilities, and should be carried out by an external coach	19	112	125	148	30	434	3.13	1.02
Q33	I have no evidence that my coaching makes a positive impact	2	22	27	245	132	428	4.13	0.78
Q34	I believe that important business activities that require coaching support are assigned to external coaches	19	89	137	146	39	430	3.23	1.02
Q35	I can never be as skilled as an external coach	7	40	63	213	100	423	3.85	0.94
Q36	The contribution my coaching practice makes to the success of the organisation is recognised when my performance is reviewed by my manager	27	136	99	129	43	434	2.94	1.12
Q37	I use the skills I've developed as a coach to improve my working relationships	179	247	4	1	0	431	4.40	0.52
Q38	I can talk to a coach supevisor, or peer coach to resolve my coaching dilemmas	189	208	12	20	2	431	4.30	0.78
Q39	I am encouraged to take part in development activities aimed at improving my coaching practice	160	203	29	36	4	432	4.11	0.92
Q40	I have to limit the coaching I do to avoid conflict with my day-job	34	212	31	124	23	424	2.74	1.12
Q41	Colleagues acknowledge that coaching is part of my role in the organisation	53	199	114	64	3	433	3.54	0.91
Q42	My line manager isn't interested in my role as a coach	13	58	80	178	98	427	3.68	1.06
Q43	I find it difficult to get permission to do coaching activities sometimes	5	23	32	219	153	432	4.14	0.85
Q44	I find coaching very fulfilling	270	153	3	3	0	429	4.61	0.54
Q45	I have as much to offer a coachee as an external coach	108	174	121	26	2	431	3.84	0.89
Q46	Being an internal coach is not worth the effort	1	12	15	153	252	433	4.48	0.72

Appendix 11 - ‘Not Sure’ responses to statements, ranked



Appendix 12 - ‘Strongly agree’ responses to statements, ranked



Appendix 13 - Ranked weighted average scores for the statements

Appendix 14 – Graphical depictions of research participants' coaching practice

Chart 1. Position held in the organisation

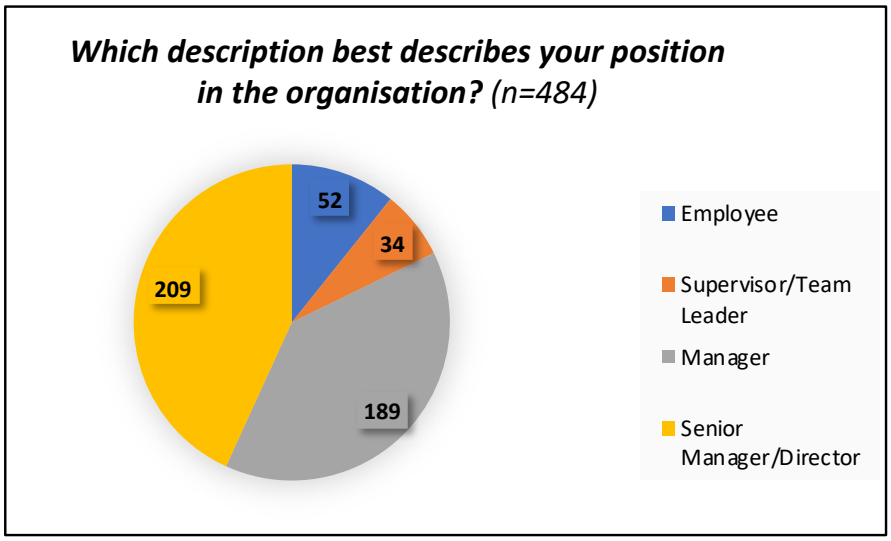


Chart 2. Provision of training to become a coach

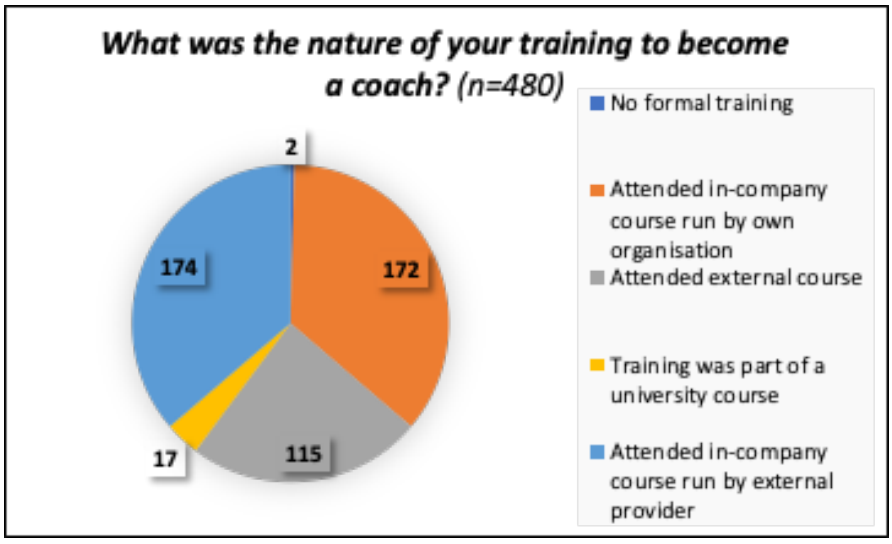


Chart 3. Level of coaching qualification held

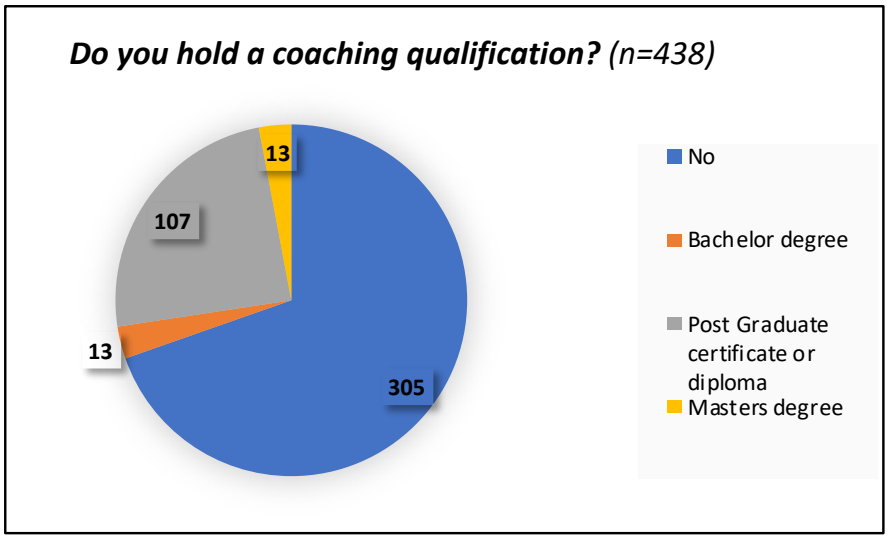


Chart 4. Form of coach accreditation held

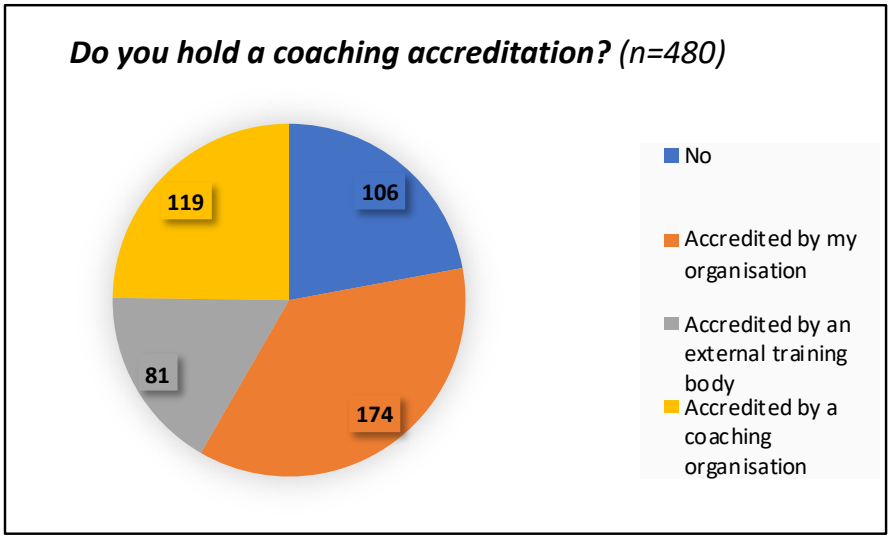


Chart 5. Length of experience as a coach

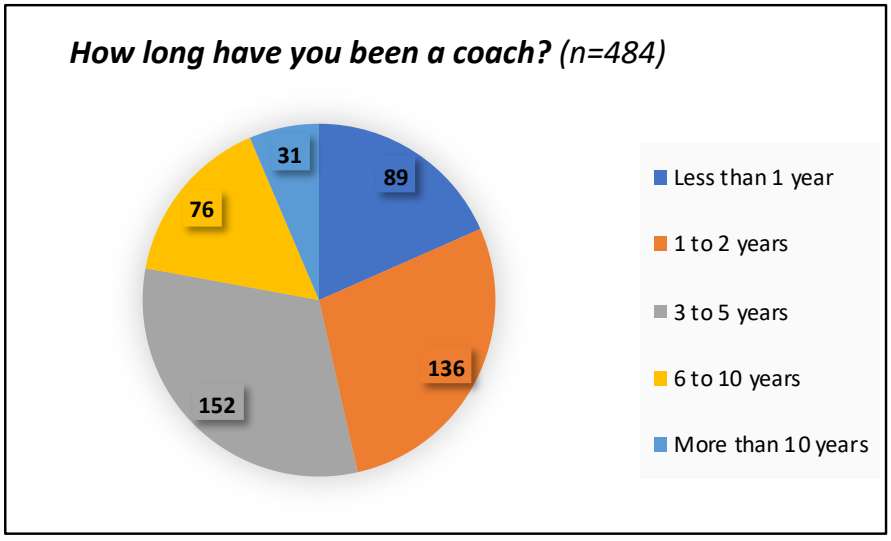


Chart 6. Amount of time spent coaching

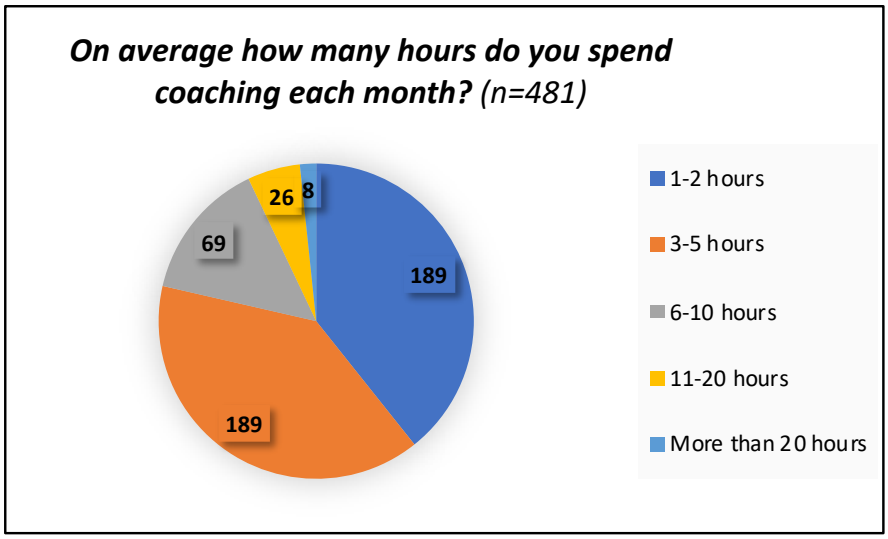
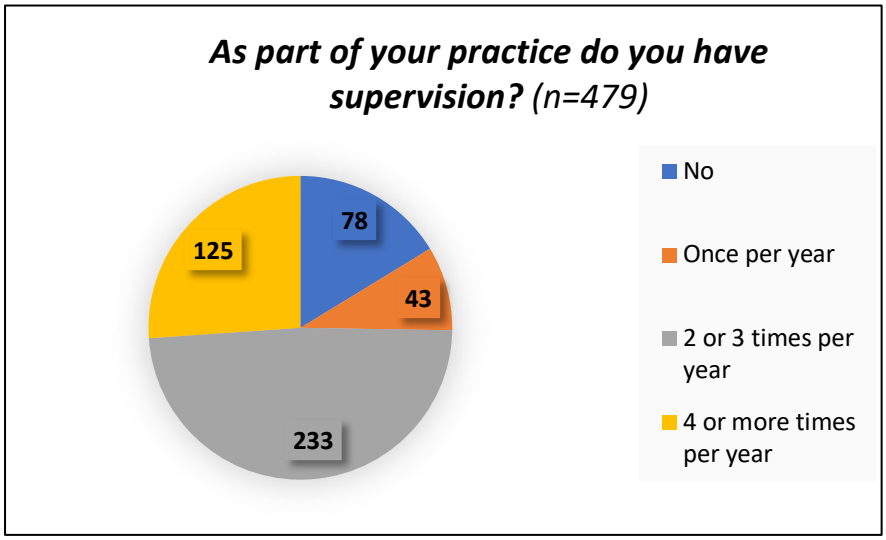


Chart 7. Supervision of coaching practice



Appendix 15 – Coding analysis of responses to Survey Q9 (n=467) – What were your reasons for becoming an internal coach?

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
For self (n=336)	Learn or develop skills	123	Becoming a coach seen as a way to access and learn new skills; personal development.	"I wanted to expand my skills" (5149541132); "Personal growth" (5119039486); "To help me with my active listening skills" (5031793098).
	Improve as a manager or leader	39	The skills developed as a coach contributing to becoming a better manager or leader; sometimes a wish to change management style, for example to become less directive.	"To improve on my ability to lead a team first and foremost" (5152461272); "Develop more leadership skills, particularly empathetic ones" (5117612009); "To improve my management style" (5059556505).
	Curiosity, interest in	46	Curious to understand more about coaching and what it might offer; based on limited knowledge interested to know more; sometimes seen as an intellectual challenge.	"At first? Curiosity" (5126016496); "I had minimal training on a […] course and that really sparked my interest" (5139761811).
	Personal belief in coaching	36	Strong belief that coaching works, that it is the right approach to use: Act of faith.	"My conviction that coaching is a powerful tool" (5132065311); "Convinced coaching can help everyone" (5150869179).
	Personal gratification	26	Get pleasure from seeing the effect their support has on others; enjoy working with people, unlocking their potential.	"I enjoy helping people and wanted a way to incorporate that into my working life" (5116320113). Note: Half the respondents appeared to conflate becoming a coach with being a coach: "It is very rewarding" (5141527157).
	Self-understanding	13	Seeking to better understand themself.	"I wanted to know more about myself and my motivation" (5138961928).
	Gain qualifications	11	Becoming a coach seen as a way to formalise skills currently deployed informally; or, a way to gain formal qualifications, or recognition.	"Formalise my previous [coaching] experience" (5144613898)
	Increase visibility	10	Gain greater knowledge and understanding of their wider organisation.	"Learn about other areas of the organisation" (5119830868).
	Enhance career	7	See becoming a coach as beneficial to their career prospects.	"To strengthen my CV" 5148232662).

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
	Increase network	7	Opportunity to connect and work with new people in the organisation; to become more personally visible.	"Expand my professional network" (5076264337)
	Increase influence	6	Through coaching increase ability to influence peers and management.	"A desire to have formal training to help influence peers and upper managers" (5090932614).
	Coach beyond current organisation	12	An opportunity to develop skills that could be used beyond current role or organisation, either professionally or personally.	"Wanted to develop skills to help me earn an income after retiring" (5149537512).
For colleagues (n=188)	Support development of colleagues	183	Through working as a coach, help others to develop and grow in their role, or support them as they face challenges. Clear interest in helping people to develop themselves.	"Passionate about developing and helping people grow" (5187948268); "I have the feeling to give time for a human cause" (5117990111); "help others be the best they can" (5094221225); "[helping] others [to] overcome barriers and achieve goals" (5114315043); "to support people in being able to see the unseen" (5161764846).
	Share knowledge with colleagues	5	Wish to share own knowledge or expertise with colleagues.	"I have a lot of 'life' experience that I wanted to share with others" (5121872019)
For organisation (n=98)	Improve performance	22	To help the organisation to perform better, or to deliver its objectives.	"To make a contribution to improving the organisation" (5116295686); "to assist the organisation in becoming high performing" (5042726985); "support the company to unleash the potential talent it has" (5118145579).
	Develop coaching culture	13	To support the organisation in moving towards a coaching culture.	"Interested in shifting the management culture in my organisation to a more coaching style" (5077025645); "part of the organisation's priorities to introduce a coaching culture" 5098388883).
	Give something back	23	Desire to repay the organisation for perceived benefit received: to reciprocate.	"I felt that training to become a coach would give something back to the organisation" (5086193593).
	Expected to coach	30	Expected to coach because of position or role in the organisation.	"Part of the job role" (5146108923); "I am part of an HR structure and understand that coaching is part of my daily life" (5116617383).

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
	Told to coach	10	Recommended to become a coach by a third party. Could be because that person saw skills or values which aligned with coaching or could be to address a perceived development need.	"It was a development opportunity and suggested by my line manager as something she thought I would be good at" (5116625914).
Previous experience (n=113)	Previously a coachee	64	Had previously been coached, had benefitted from the experience, and decided to become a coach as a result.	"[I] was previously a coachee and really got a lot out of it" 5157668549); [I] was impressed by the degree to which it changed my approach to my work and my life" (5143266514); [I] wanted to help others achieve the same benefits" (5137069368).
	Previously a coach	18	Had already acted as a coach (or mentor or counsellor), or had training as a coach, elsewhere. Wanted to bring this experience to the internal coach role.	"Prior knowledge of coaching in another organisation" (5043117010).
	Complementary to existing approach	31	Saw coaching as a good fit with existing skills and experience or with their values and beliefs.	"Already a mentor for a postgrad externally accredited qualification" (5148628860); "Consistent with my values of empowering others" (5118232280)

Appendix 16 – Coding analysis of responses to Survey Q47 (n=370) – Today, what are your reflections on being an internal coach in your organisational context?

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
Rewarding (n=159)	Rewarding for the coach	159	Coaching experienced as worthwhile, rewarding, energising, gratifying.	"It's an honour and a privilege to be an internal coach" (5120587971); "Becoming an internal coach has brought an extra dimension to my professional life and is a source of energy for me" (5132770874); "Coaching is, hands down, the most valuable and rewarding part of my job" (5050226508).
Challenging (n=109)	Balancing act	36	The difficulty of making time within work agenda for coaching activity.	"No time is recognised in my job plan, so everything I do is 'over and above' my day-job" (5120430072); I am really careful that the time I spend coaching does not impact my day-job" (5120029217).
	Insider (versus external)	27	1. Regarded as less capable than an external coach. 2. Remaining neutral when have inside knowledge.	1. "[Internal coach is] not always valued as much as an external coach" (5083711532); 2. "Being an internal coach can be difficult as relationships may get in the way of non-judgement" (5080801868).
	3rd party understanding	16	Lack of understanding by colleagues of what coaching is and is not.	"I think most employees still do not know what value coaching has or understand what it is" (5119629824); "There is a perception in the organisation that coaching is provided to individuals who are under-performing" (5077115292).
	Maintaining practice	10	Difficult to sustain coaching practice, for example because of lack of coachees.	"The main difficulty is getting enough coachees to put themselves forward" (5135221771).
	Misuse	8	Coaching deliberately used for an inappropriate purpose.	"Some managers use [coaching] as an alternative to managing their staff directly" (5148232662).
	Not measurable	6	Inability to measure benefits of coaching felt to be undermining efforts.	
	Self-doubt	3	Concern about capability as a coach.	

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
	Keeping coaching alive	3	Concern about whether coaching can be sustained in the organisation.	
Recognition/ valued (n=101)	Yes, by the organisation	27	Coaching experienced as acknowledged and valued by the organisation or senior management.	"Coaching is highly valued by the business" (5143630619); "the 'buy-in' is clear from the top" (5142245170); "It is an important part of the organisation's strategy to develop people, and coaches are recognised for their contribution" (5116491236).
	Not by management	32	Coaching not felt to be valued by senior management.	"Internal coaches are not valued in my organisation because those in senior positions do not understand the value that a coaching culture can bring" (5161634307)
	Not by line manager	25	Impact on coach of line manager's lack of support for their coaching.	"Much depends on line manager's view of coaching. My current line manager does not view it as playing an important function with the organisation, so coaching is limited as the day-job has to come first" (5148567443).
	Yes, by those directly involved	13	Internal coach contribution recognised by those they work with as a coach.	"I have the impression of a gap between the very positive feedback I receive from my coachees, and a generally low level of recognition and visibility in my company" (5116520555).
	Reputation building	4	Belief that a reputation as a coach is developing.	
Belief in coaching (n=100)	For colleagues	51	Belief that coaching is helpful and valuable for colleagues coached.	"Enable employees to think for themselves and come up with their own solutions to problems" (5153038027); "value I can add to those who struggle with organisational change and restructures by helping them to put change, workload, and life pressures into perspective and thus adopting a positive approach to change" (5148145450).
	For the organisation	36	Coaching a way to help the organisation be more successful, for example by facilitating change.	"Provides the organisation with empowered staff who can realise their potential to deal with conflict, problem solve and adapt to and manage change" (5088059083).

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
	What I am	13	Coaching described as part of the person's identity.	"I feel as much a professional coach as I am a professional accountant" (5150935839).
Self-development (n=97)	Personal development	72	Has developed personally, grown, and acquired additional skills through coaching.	"I've learned more and developed more than I expected" (5116625914); "Being a coach has made me a much wiser person, better listener, less judgemental, more confident" (5119629834); "The amount of personal development I've received has been more than equal to the effort of coaching (for which no time is recognised in my job plan)" (5120430072).
	Understanding of organisation	16	Experience and better understand unfamiliar parts of the organisation.	"[coaching] gives me much broader perspective of the business" (5031793098); internal coaching has given me a wider and more in-depth understanding of the challenges facing my organisation" (5148232662).
	Build network	5	Opportunity to connect with new colleagues.	"A very good opportunity to build trust with colleagues and build network" (5117791833).
	Self-understanding	4	Have learned things about themselves.	"I have learned so much about myself by coaching others" (5083711532).
Support (n=67)	Scheme support	27	Experience support being provided by the coaching scheme: scheme leadership and/or fellow coaches.	"I think we have a good 'setup' from a training, CPD and supervision perspective" (5122403548).
	Line manager support	6	Supported by their line manager to coach.	
	Management support	5	Supported by their organisation to coach.	
	Not supported by management	25	Feel unsupported in their coaching by the management of the organisation.	"There are a small number of us fighting to keep coaching visible but there is no organisational support at all" (5161764846).
	Not supported by line manager	4	Not supported in their coaching by their line manager.	

Theme	Code	Frequency	Code description	Participant quotations
Beyond the coaching room (n=40)	Team/colleagues	26	Coaching techniques deployed with team and/or colleagues.	"I use coaching skills more in my day-to-day job than as an 'assigned' coach" (5116270341).
	Professional coach	12	Desire to extend coaching into a professional role.	"I will continue my professional development as a coach so I can start my own practice" (5056411521).
	Family and friends	2	Use coaching skills with family or friends.	

Appendix 17 – Sample of an interview transcript

Interview with Phil Green, which took place on 4th September 2017 and lasted 52 minutes.

The sample below represents approximately 80% of the interview. The transcript is in the left-hand column and the notes I made on reviewing the transcript are reproduced in the right-hand column. Note that names have been removed to preserve confidentiality.

Interviewer: Thinking about the more formal side of it. So you're working with coachees who are not linked directly to your part of the organization. And you also indicated that it's a big job and it's an all consuming role. You and I are both part-time coaches in that sense with full-time jobs. How do you experience balancing those two roles, the formal coach, separate to your organization, versus the day job that you have?	
Coach PG: Well, the formal coach is part of the organization, so everybody I see is somewhere within the organization.	
Interviewer: But separate to your team.	
Coach PG: Separate to my job. I guess it's in the plan. I have April who helps plan time and where I am supposed to be and so on and so forth. But it is about the planning. I try not to have more than four, maximum five coachees on the go at any one time. Because invariably, they want to meet every four to six weeks if there's a, there's a specific conversation or challenge or piece of work that they want to complete.	*Balancing coaching with day-job is about planning: diary management.*
And that becomes, or is a quite difficult number to manage from my point of view. Happy balance is about three. If I can spare a couple of hours for three people, three times a month, three times every six weeks, then it's about managing the diary. Managing the time to have the conversation and then write up the notes afterwards. Literally, it's about diary	*Sets a maximum of 4 or 5 coachees, "happy balance is about three".*

management. "Where am I going to be? How long am I going to be? Where can we fit the slots in?"	
Interviewer: You almost seem to present that as something of a burden? At the same time, you're obviously doing it.	
Coach PG: More than four-- So I went through a period in the summer last year where I had five coachees on at the same time, and that was almost too much, it became very difficult to manage that volume of conversation. And the stuff that stays with you after the conversations, the stuff you take to supervision, and so on and so forth, because it's that time to build in.	*A high number of coachees is not a burden, limit is about being able to manage the impact*
So not a burden, its just difficult to make sure you're giving it the right amount of time. Also, being able to switch off before you walk in the room in order to be able to give that person their hour or their hour and half or their two hours, whatever length it was scheduled for. Not a burden, just difficult to manage. Three to four is okay, I could do that. I've currently got three in the group, so it's absolutely fine.	*Need to ensure have the time to give each coachee the proper attention.*
Interviewer: That capacity that you give to this, are you able to control and determine or do you find that those coachees are being pushed towards you?	
Coach PG: No, I work with the guys in learning and development, they have a list of people waiting for coaching and we match off when-- So, I will let them know that I've got capacity. Right now, I've got three. I've got some big strategic projects to deliver this year so I won't go beyond that.	*Manage balance by notifying scheme management of his capacity.* *Current involvement in large projects means is restricting 'available' capacity to three coachees.*
Like I say, I have a couple of informal arrangements, people like [name], who let's	

say, she'll book in for three or four weeks time, maybe just an hour catch up.	*Also makes time for informal catch-ups with several former coachees.*
Interviewer: You create that balance by effectively managing the capacity that you make available?	
Coach PG: Yes.	
Interviewer: And then vary a little bit with what you've got on in terms of the bigger picture?	
Coach PG: Yes. I know in the second half of November into December, things calm down a bit. And into January, things would be fairly steady for me. Then, as we moved into February-March, things will get busier all the way through to the end of summer. I tend to make myself available but that is certainly not a burden, I can manage the capacity.	*Forecasts level of activity going forward and manages capacity for coaching appropriately.*
There was a real need last summer for the overhead to be greater, so when the organization invests a significant amount of time and money in your development, I believe you're obliged to go through a bit of stretch if there's a need. And there was last summer. Right now, it's perfectly manageable.	*When organisation needs more coaching capacity, as last summer, feels that organisational investment in him "obliged" him to "stretch" himself to support.*
We also do a coaching facilitation, team coaching facilitation. Our [leadership development] program here works with cohorts of people to go through a 10-month leadership program. A bit of residential, a bit of people, a bit of strategy.	
One of the modules they have to pass is a coaching module. They're working in groups, in cohorts, of about four or five people on practice and coaching each other in a coach practice environment. And as a qualified coach, I also will supervise that conversation and help with feedback and hints and tips. That's separate to the individual coaching, that's more about observational or facilitation.	*Also provides support to group of participants on [leadership development] Programme.*

And they have to do it for 10 months, they have to have five sessions. And right now, I don't have a group but last summer, I also had a group as well, so. **Interviewer:** So effectively, for you then, coaching impinges on your professional life at a number of levels. Part of the way you manage your team, working with a specific member of separate individuals within your organization, but also, supporting the learning and development processes within your organization. **Coach PG:** I see it as part of my role. So I've got two roles, I run the […] network of 550 people in our 85 [locations], and I'm a member of the senior leadership team. With membership of the senior leadership team, in my opinion, in my view, there are also some cross-functional responsibilities. I get heavily involved in organizing the annual conference, and I have hosted it and facilitated it on and off for the last few years. I don't have to do that but it's something I enjoy and it's something I feel I can contribute to. Same with the Annual Awards, I've done that for the last 10 years, up until last year. And I believe I can also add additional value by the coaching. We had a family fun day here on Saturday where a lot of senior leadership guys got involved. It was a bit-- [crosstalk]. Well, that happened on Saturday, and the senior leaders organized that and run that, I didn't have anything to do with it, not because I don't think it's a good idea but because I don't see my skill set and my contribution necessarily doing that kind of thing. But with the facilitation and conferences, road shows, which we are working on for the […] network at the moment, coaching, peer coaching, the groups of peer coaching, I see	*Coaching regarded as part of role.* *Coaching is part of making a cross-functional contribution as a senior leader.*

that I can add this cross-functional contribution as well as running the […] network. And as a senior leader, my view is that it goes with the territory. Though, not everybody sees it that way, and some people do purely focus on their silos, but that's up to them.	
Interviewer: Perhaps I can ask then, how would you describe the effect or impact that being an internal coach has had on you?	
Coach PG: Personally, I have found it really helpful in landing a satisfying-- thoroughly enjoyed the experience. But also, really challenging and tough and quite draining as well at times. Depending on what you talk about, and depending on the subject matter and the person. I've seen some great success with some really good feedback from people who have come with a challenge or an opportunity and finished up after the 6 or 10 sessions, and have been really in a completely different space.	*"Thoroughly enjoy the experience [of coaching]"* *Had positive feedback from coachees*
But then, I've also had conversations with people who have got some real challenges, both personal and professional. And some of that stays with you. Particularly, if it's about the organization or what they're experiencing in their role. Because as I said, as a senior leader, I feel accountable for everybody in the organization to a degree, more some less others.	*Experiencing conversations about real issues, whether professional or personal can be "really challenging and tough and quite draining".*
When you're involved in a conversation that is-- it's difficult to hear as a senior leader that somebody is experiencing difficulties in their role or have a challenge which you think is not something that you'd expect to be happening in the organization.	*As a senior leader difficult to hear that someone is experiencing difficulties.*
Yes, of course, that conversation has to stay with you and can't go elsewhere. That can be	

quite draining and quite challenging sometimes. **Interviewer:** But it sounds like it's also ultimately very rewarding. **Coach PG:** Yes, absolutely, I'm really pleased. The post grad program at [university] was a real eye opening, and almost life changing without being a clichéd, program, very intense. Also, an experience of self-discovery as well, some of the exercises, some of the theory and some of the particular modules you get to work with, a lot about self and experiencing the challenges, which is really difficult, or I found difficult but rewarding at the same time. It puts me in a much better position to help, support, and, guide is the wrong word but challenge some of the conversations that I've had to get involved in here. Also, I can take the themes to supervision. We have a couple of very senior coaches here who also act as supervisors. **Interviewer:** Supervisors drawn from within your organization? **Coach PG:** Yes. We have access to external ones if we want to but I chose to use the two that we have internally. **Interviewer:** I'll come to that support in a moment, but just before we-- Has becoming a coach changed you then? **Coach PG:** Yes, without question. **Interviewer:** Could you expand on that a little bit more for me? **Coach PG:** It's made me much more self-aware, of me, and the impact of me in the way I behave, speak, and act, and my influence on an individual or a group of individuals. It's	*Conversations are confidential, and this can be challenging and draining.* *Challenging, but rewarding.* *Post-grad coaching programme was "a real eye opening, and almost life changing without being clichéd, programme; very intense".* *Learned a lot about self.* *Better able to provide both support and challenge to others now.* *Chooses to use internal supervisor rather than external.* *Coaching has changed him* *Has become more self aware, and aware of his impact upon others.*

helped me to hear more in conversations so not just listening but hearing more of what's being said and the way it's being said. Which sometimes, when you hear things in general conversation, you almost start to move into coaching mode even though you haven't been invited to. [laughs].	*Hears differently now* *'Hearing' now at a level that can trigger coaching almost automatically.*
It's given me an additional sense of purpose, when I was searching for some self-development, some personal development. To the point where I'm humming and haring about going on to do the diploma in coaching psychology which starts next year at [university]. I absolutely love the theory and the coaching practice, but on the academic side, "Good luck" that's all I can say. [laughter]. I just really struggle with the academic aspects of it.	*Has given purpose to his search for personal development. Now considering further study - coaching psychology – as a result.*
Interviewer: I suppose there's a bit of about our nature. My roots, I started as an internal coach within the organization. Training, we used Sheffield Hallam University and the training involved the ability to do several modules there if people wished, so post-grad certificate being the goal. But I went on and did the masters because I loved the academic side of it as well. **Coach PG:** Did you? You loved the academic as well. **Interviewer:** Then I stepped off the masters and went to York St. John with Bob Garvey to do the PhD. But I'm not saying it's the route for everyone.	
Coach PG: It's a lot of work, I love the practice. But the academic side, I struggled with it, not because of ability, but because of view and	*Prefers the [coaching] practice to the academic side.*

opinion on the way in which you're expected to present. **Interviewer:** It's quite, almost stifling sometimes. More than perhaps an outsider might appreciate; I've come to realize that. **Coach PG:** But for me, it has changed the way I think, feel, and hear. I don't always choose to use it, sometimes I choose to hear and think and feel but act and react in a different way. But it's opened up the senses a bit if that doesn't sound too odd. It was a big impact. Yes. **Interviewer:** I'd like to turn now to some things that might have an impact upon your coaching. In the survey that you took part in and 400 other internal coaches, people identified that as coaches, they are engaged with a number of different stakeholders or types of stakeholder and that the attitude of those stakeholders can vary in terms of them as internal coaches. I wonder what your experience of the different stakeholder attitudes towards you as an internal coach is. **Coach PG:** In terms of stakeholders? So coachees, managers, or line managers where we would have a three way. Those kinds of stakeholders? **Interviewer:** Yes. People work with coachees but then there are coachees' line managers sometimes in the mix, there's their own line manager sometimes in the mix, that sense of where it seems to fit with the organization. It's unique for different people, I'm just wondering how you feel about those different stakeholders, how they seem to impact on you. **Coach PG:** Going right back, one of the reasons why I'd struggled to find my next piece of development four, three years ago, was that	*"[Coaching] has changed the way I think, feel and hear… it's opened up the senses… a big impact".* *Recognises that sometimes chooses not to use it.*

my boss at the time who's no longer here didn't see the value in me going to do coaching post graduate. He didn't see the value and wouldn't sign it off. Whereas, the head of organizational development, [name]-- Do you know [name]?	*Line manager wouldn't support taking the coaching post-graduate course, not seeing the value.*
Interviewer: I've come across [name].	
Coach PG: Yes, we graduated on the same day from [university]. [Head of Organisational Development] view was that I should. [name]'s view was that he didn't see the value in it, and it wasn't until he left that the opportunity opened itself up. So that experience of a stakeholder who says, "No, I can see you'd be good at it but I don't think it'll add value to your role."	*Qualifying as a coach was supported by Head of Organisational Development, but was not possible until his line manager changed.* *Line manager recognised could be a good coach, but saw no added value to his role, even though responsible for a large number of staff.*
My argument was, "I work with hundreds and hundreds of people every day how would that not help?" [name], who's my boss now is supportive of that, albeit-- I guess I'll be putting words in his mouth, as a secondary responsibility to delivering the performance of the branch network, from that point of view.	*New line manager is supportive, but clear that coaching is secondary to the day-job.*
Interviewer: His support, you might say is passive. No objection, no problem, no difficulty [crosstalk].	
Coach PG: Yes. And sees the value in it from an organizational point of view, but isn't my primary function. [Name] who's [name]'s boss, who is the head of people and development, very supportive from a cultural development point of view of the organization. All of our leadership are better coaches, that's a default statement that we would use, and part of our role as coaches is to help them to become better coaches. Whether it's coach-coachee conversations or when we're working with groups of people.	*Line manager sees value to the organisation [of his coaching] but is clear it's not his primary function.* *Recognises that coaching and development of coaching behaviours is seen as an important element of the development of the organisation's culture.*
I found different experiences with line managers. I have found some very supportive	

line managers who recognize their skill as X. Thinking of a particular individual, very good technical manager of function, very technical function as well, lots of technical expertise in his teams. But actually, from a leadership, an empathetic and developmental point of view, it's not really a big strength of his.	*Has experienced line managers who recognise that coaching can complement their own skills gaps and support their teams in a way that is not one of their strengths.*
He knows he has to work on it. He's really grateful that there is a channel for his leaders to use when they want to talk about some of the challenges or opportunities or some of the problems that they're having. He is very supportive of using the coaching facility.	*Line manager recognising its complementarities is very supportive of coaching.*
Interviewer: That sounds as if it's someone who, they know it's not them, but they know enough to know that it's not them.	
Coach PG: Yes, they're very mature, very mature. Says, "I'm working hard on it, but I'm never going to be able to do what you do." I couldn't do what he does either, so very mature from that point of view, but then also I experienced others that are really supportive of it but also experienced a couple of, "Well, fine. If they've got to do it, they've got to do it. It's all about a day job though, isn't it?"	*Acknowledges that it requires a mature sense of self to recognise and acknowledge that coaching can fill a gap in own skill set.* *Also experienced line managers who, whilst not blocking their subordinates question the priority of coaching versus the day-job.*
Interviewer: Do you think that's about understanding or really just about focus, and focus is the day job and this stuff is more peripheral?	
Coach PG: Yes, and the two that I can think of, that spring to mind, are very much from a similar part of the organization, which is much more around running the-- almost more running the financial performance aspects of the organization, so fewer people but lots of numbers, than running the people leadership side of the organization. That's where my sense of, "Okay, fine. If it's got to be done, it's got to be done, but--"	*Recognises this attitude may be linked to role, technical/numbers based rather that people leadership.*

I think no, I've never had any stakeholder come to me and say, "You can't" or, "You shouldn't," because my view would be for two reasons**:** A, because I'm the senior leader and they wouldn't. And B, because we talk a lot about the value of coaching in our organization, at all of our conferences and senior group meetings off-site. For somebody to say, "That isn't what I want to do," would be counter to our core strategy and ethos.	*No stakeholder has said "no" or "you shouldn't", which he attributes to his position as a senior leader and that the value of coaching is talked about in the organisation. "For someone to say 'that isn't what I want to do' would be counter to our core strategy and ethos".*
Interviewer: How do you feel that the contribution of your coaching makes to the organization is recognized then?	
Coach PG: Recognized? Well, I don't think it is overtly recognized. We don't celebrate the coaches. The coaches don't celebrate another year in coaching. We have a lot of support around continuous personal development sessions here, so once every probably two or three months, there'll be some kind of session. The fact that it's accepted and in some aspects supported, that it's part of my role, I think it is a recognition of how important it is.	*Doesn't feel contribution as a coach is overtly recognised – "we don't celebrate the coaches".* *But that the coach role is important is recognised through the support made available (CPD; resources; visibility).*
For example, we've got a team coaching workshop coming up in December. Unfortunately, I can't make it. In December, unfortunately, I can't make it. But that's an external team coach coming in and working with, there are only five or six places on the program, but introduce a different aspect of coaching to a group of coaches here.	
So I think it's recognized. There's quite a lot of resource we can call on. We know who are coaches. We have a list, so each other can call them at any time when we need to, but we don't necessarily celebrate the fact--	
There's still a stigma I think, and it's an interesting one, that if you go and see the coach, it's because you've got a problem to solve. We talk about it from time to time. If	*Believes that there is still a stigma attached to seeing a coach.*

you're seeing the coach, you've got a problem to solve, whereas, that's not obviously-- that helps, we found it helps, but that's not necessarily always the case. It might be that you're searching for something or you want some help with something that's going particularly well. **Interviewer:** That sounds slightly at odds with what I've been hearing, which is that actually coaching and people development is pretty important in this organization. **Coach PG:** It is. Absolutely. It's better than it was a couple of years ago, but, I still feel that there's a stigma attached to, "I'm having some coaching, therefore I must have a problem to solve." The two main guys I've got at the moment, they have career challenges that they trying to get through, which is fine, absolutely fine and the work is going well, but it isn't that often somebody comes along and says, "Well, something great has happened and I want to talk through how I can replicate it elsewhere." **Interviewer:** If I've understood you right then, recognition of your contribution comes in the form of support, CPD opportunities, and things of that nature. **Coach PG:** Maybe I'll go to do the psychology next year. **Interviewer:** So opportunities--? **Coach PG:** Yes. I did promise myself I won't do anything else, but maybe I'll go and do that. **Interviewer:** Would you say that it's a recognized part of your job or would that be taking it too far? Is it part of how your performance is measured or is--?	*Better than it was (stigma), but still associated with solving a problem rather than the challenge of replicating success.* *Reflecting that might do a further coaching course, even though had promised himself he wouldn't.*

Coach PG: No. Actually, we have performance reviews every three months-- every four months, so I've got my performance review in a couple weeks time. In my behaviors element, I have noted that the continued support for people looking for coaching in the organization. So where I don't necessarily think it's-- Somebody could do my job and not be an internal coach, but I think it recognized that it's more helpful. Does that make sense?	*He notes that he is a coach under behaviours section in performance review, but no formal recognition beyond that.*
Interviewer: Yes.	
Coach PG: But as my senior leader role and responsibility, not necessarily as my director of [function] responsibility. Does that make sense?	*Believes that he is a coach is acknowledged as positive, but as a leader in the organisation rather than as a functional head.*
Interviewer: Yes.	
Coach PG: It helps, but I wouldn't say it was necessarily a prerequisite that I was an internal coach, to be able to coach and have coaching experience probably, but not necessary to be an internal coach.	*Believes coach role is seen as helpful to delivery of day-job but not essential.*
Interviewer: Another thing they came out of the survey, obviously, which was sort of more than 60 organizations across a number of countries was that people's perception of this support that they received to be a coach was very variable. You've already talked quite a bit about the support that you receive. Would I be right in thinking that you would characterize the support that you receive to be a coach as good and fairly comprehensive?	
Coach PG: Yes. You're left to be self-sufficient in terms of organizing your coaching sessions, and the locations, and the rooms, and so forth. I'm very fortunate I've got April to help me, but, there's always regular groups, coaching group sessions where we will just get together, have a coffee, talk about things, ask what's going	*As a coach feels that good support is available, from informal get togethers to formal CPD.*

on, maybe some things that people are struggling with. There is the formalized development, so CPD, and then there's the supervision aspect if you, as and when you want to catch up with supervision.	
There's plenty of support there, but it's up to you as a coach to go and use the support, not necessarily-- it's not organized that you will be automatically booked into a session, or, from that point of view.	*As a coach have to take responsibility for arranging access to the support.*
Interviewer: Thank you. We've talked a lot about internal. I wonder to what extent if at all, does the wider coaching community or coaching industry impact upon you was an internal coach.	
Coach PG: EMCC and the like, I keep on top of what's happening, and what's going on, and what people are talking about. But when I went into the program with [university], I had a vision that I would use the external resource and do some volunteer coaching outside the organization. And have a network of coaches outside the organization. For whatever reason, that hasn't happened. My job continues to consume most of my time. Right now, that hasn't happened but I do have a network of coaches that were on the program at [university] that we kind of catch up from time to time.	*Is aware of wider coaching world, and has had vision of engaging with it – voluntary coaching, networking, joining a group – but the reality is that it hasn't happened.*
There is a group that meet in [city] once a month, that I've been to a couple of times, a group of coaches. But it doesn't necessarily-- I think I had in my plan that it would do, but right now, it's very much focused here. If I do the psychology program then I think I'll try a bit harder to open up the external.	
Interviewer: I have the sense that there is an awareness that it's there, an awareness that it could be useful but it's not a big impact on the	

coach, the way you coach, or the way you manage yourself as a coach?	
Coach PG: No. I think it would be if I could apply the time, a part of me doesn't want to get involved, too involved in external groups because I know I can't commit the time. And therefore feel that I'm taking more than I'm contributing. I think if I had more time, when I do a different role I could well, add more time. That's where it would come in, I think. And that personal time because I am up and down the country, or in here.	*Job consumes most of his time and involves a lot of travel. Concerned that couldn't commit the time to an external group and therefore couldn't contribute appropriately.*
When I was just based in [headoffice], I found that you have more time. You're normally home on a different time and not sleeping in too many hotel room beds. The role I do takes more personal time than if it was just based here. I sacrifice that with some of the external stuff and some of the group work that I could get involved in, if I had more time. […].	
Interviewer: Turning back to you specifically and just for the last section. What has being an internal coach come to mean to you?	
Coach PG: Come to mean to me? Being an internal coach, it's an important skill I have worked hard to develop. I feel that it helps me to contribute more to the organization than just my functional responsibilities. It's given me, as I say, a bit more insight into myself and how I act and react, think and feel in certain situations. It's probably given me confidence, or is that the academic stuff?	*Being an internal coach means having "an important skill I have worked hard to develop", being able to contribute to the organisation beyond the day-job, greater personal insight, and greater confidence.*
The academic side has probably given me more confidence to wear a badge which says I have actually, not only can I do the practice, but I also understand the theory as well. I think that comes from growing up and leaving school very early with no-- with one O-level. And not being particularly academically successful until later on in life. As I say I've	*Confidence comes from knowledge of theory as well as experience of practice.*

done my Business post-grad, and obviously this. I think that aspect of it has given me a bit more confidence to be able to say, "I can do the theory as well as the practice."	
Interviewer: So if someone was to come and say to you, "Hey, I'm thinking about becoming an internal coach, I think it's for me." What questions would you get them to think about? What questions would you be asking?	
Coach PG: What questions? I'd ask them why do they think being an internal coach is for them. Where does that desire come from? What does being an internal coach right now for them mean? What's it look like? What do they think they would be involved in? Have they considered not only all of the really positive stuff that goes with working with people? But also, some of the challenges surround keeping information that you can't share anywhere else and having that retained for a period of time? Have they thought about how they'd use it? How they'd balance it? How they'd pay back, almost, the investment over what period of time?	*A potential new internal coach? Why, where does the desire come from? Test their understanding of what is involved, balance with day-job, recognition of paying back the organisation's investment.*
How much time do they think they can allocate to it? Because it's something that I think you need to do, as well as just have. You need to be coaching as well as you say, "I am a coach."	*They need to coach, not just say they are a coach.*
Interviewer: I always get the sense that there's a concern in there to test whether they thought about it properly.	
Coach PG: Yes. We have a really good internal program of coaching for high performance. We've changed the name a bit now, I think it's called [programmed name]. And that's a number of modules over 12 months, so on and so forth. Really good program. I think doing the external program as well that [university] has, it has given me some	

more insight into, not only the coaching for performance internally, because most of the stuff I talked about-- we talked about is business related.	
But also, when do you then get into some of the personal stuff, it can be very, very difficult sometimes to have those conversations. So, do they have enough time to do it properly? Why do they want to do it? And are they prepared for all the real success and gratification that goes with helping people? But also some of the challenges that can-- You know stuff sometimes you'd rather not know. Psychologically, have they thought some of that stuff through as well?	*Test, do they understand, and are they prepared for the difficult conversations, the psychological impact of some of the things you hear.*
Because if they're going to be internal coaches, then they would be used and they would be utilized as resource to help and to support and develop other people. And it isn't just, "I've done that now, tick." You've got to use it. And we're all busy as well. I don't see many people kicking their heels and sat around.	*Being an internal coach means doing it, not just ticking a box.*
You can't go home and say to your wife, if I had one. "Oh, I had this conversation today with this person." You can't do it. You can't go down for a coffee with your peers and say, "Oh, guess what? I've just--" It stays with you. I'd ask them a few questions and I'd encourage them. I've got two of my guys on the [Coach development programme] at the moment.	*It is important to hold what you hear confidential, you can't gossip.*

Appendix 18 – Coding of interview transcripts

The mind map below shows the primary codes which were identified from analysis of the transcripts of the 20 interviews conducted with internal coaches.

The codes were grouped into nine clusters: support; stakeholder attitudes; balancing roles; relationship with coaching industry; own route into coaching; attitude towards potential new coaches; fit with internal coach's life; why coach? and, changed by coaching. Note that these clusters were not an attempt to identify themes, but were a means of facilitating the extraction of data from interview transcripts into the codes identified.

The notes taken from analysis of the interview transcripts which support one of these clusters - balancing roles – are reproduced to demonstrate the data captured to support each code. This approach was repeated for all nine clusters of codes.


Internal Coaches (20 interviews)
Support
Personal responsibility to access
Recognition = support
Coaching needs promoting
Access to supervision
Role of scheme leader
Stakeholder attitudes
Coachees
Coach's Line manager
Colleagues
Organisation/senior management
Change over time
Balancing roles
Analyse; plan; do
Coaching is important
Capacity not commitment
Role gives flexibility
Relationship with coaching industry
Not engaged
Tried to engage
First contact
Experienced coaching
Conversation with existing coach
Experienced coaching through a course
Suggested to
Naturally coach
Attitude towards potential new coaches
Check their understanding
Check their motives
Fit within internal coach's life
Beyond the coaching room
Not just doing, being
Part of role
Why coach?
Belief in coaching
For my colleagues
To contribute to the business
Differentiates me
So rewarding
Because I benefit personally
Changed by coaching
Self- awareness/reflection
Greater confidence
Approach to management
Appreciation of others
Other focussed
Change recognised by others
Not changed

Balancing roles

Analyse; plan; do

Coach JC -
Coach JFo - Since I've been an IC I've now changed my role, I'm now the team manager and that's a big change for me, it's something I've struggled with and it's hard to fit in internal coaching as well" (p4). Has therefore reduced capacity to 1 coachee.
Coach AB - Balances demands on time by determining what capable of doing - "How many coachees could [I] manage? Then I commit to that" (p5). Planning resource process works. "Whatever [coaching] dates I committed to I try to honour... it's the last thing I would move in my diary" (p5). Recognises that others [coachees] are committing their time too.
Coach SA - Line manager does not dictate balance. Ensures that day-job is fully covered.
Coach PG - Sets a maximum of 4 or 5 coachees: "happy balance is about 3" (p5). Manage balance by notifying scheme management of capacity. Forecasts level of activity going forward and manages capacity for coaching appropriately. A higher number of coachees is not a burden, the limit is about being able to manage the impact of the information taken in - "the stuff that stays with you after the conversations" (p6) - need to ensure have the time to give each coachee the proper attention. Balancing coaching with day-job is about planning: diary management.
Coach ED - Acknowledges that balancing roles can be quite "quite difficult", that the day-job "will usually take priority" (p5), but feels is good at managing his diary and that it is very rare to have to cancel a coaching session - "I think I juggle the two roles, if you like, okay" (p5). Part of balancing roles is not to overcommit to coaching.
Coach JR - Balances the two roles by not committing to much, not taking too much coaching on. This ensures he doesn't let anyone down. Plans ahead, manages diary, tries to avoid having to move a session though he covers this risk during initial contracting. Is careful about capacity committed to ensure he can deliver the commitments he makes.
Coach JB - Workload makes fitting in coaching harder, "so I try to stick to having one coachee at a time" (p4). Engagement in coaching circles [coaching a fellow coach] reduced when coaching someone given workload. All has the opportunity to do supervision and training days - "I like to keep involved in coaching" (p4).
Coach LS - Tries to stick to coaching commitments. It is not always possible, sometimes taken out of her hands by line manager, but tries to move other things first.
Coach JP - Is juggling lots of different responsibilities; plans ahead. "It's time management, and I think I'm really good at it" (p10). Coaching is planned in the same way as all her other responsibilities. "I prioritise stuff and because the coaching is important to me, I do prioritise that. If I've got a coaching session booked in with somebody and somebody else tries to book another meeting in that, unless it was something really, really important, I would prioritise the coaching" (p8). The variety of responsibilities she manages has the effect of regenerating Coach JP.
Coach LM - Manages coaching/day-job balance by "being very careful about how many coachees I take on" (p10). Thinks up front about capacity and therefore the number of coachees she can take on.
Coach PL - Balances roles by compartmentalising. Plans and diarises coaching sessions. Schedules sessions on 'protected' days when front line role shouldn't crash in.

Coach JJ - Whenever she volunteers to do something, such as coaching, has always just absorbed it into her overall workload. She balances her roles by closely managing the elements that comprise her role. She manages the overall demand on her to ensure that she can always respond to a coaching request.
Coach BS - He prioritises coaching activities in his diary and moves other activities around to fit. He feels fortunate that he is able to coordinate his own time, though making time for coaching is about more than flexibility, it is about his attitude and the value he places on coaching. Coaching is "a really enjoyable and a really important part of my role for me" (p6). It is disappointing that some coaches seem unable to prioritise coaching and have low attendance at events because he benefits from the interaction.
Coach JFa - Is careful, in working out the capacity she is able to commit to coaching, not to over commit. She is mindful of the need to keep all aspects of her life in balance. Regards it as important to honour commitments made when taking a coaching assignment on; to see it through to the end.

Feel don't coach enough

Coach JC - "Two or three people once every four to six weeks, for anywhere between an hour and two... I don't feel like I get enough... wouldn't it be nice [if] I could coach someone every week" (p18). Feels could be a better coach if was able to coach more often.
Coach AB - Recognise that consequence of analyse and plan to capacity approach is that never commits to too many coachees at one time. Reflects that downside of restricting amount of coaching is that coaching [practice] could be better and could get more from it personally. Questions on hearing how much coaching others are doing whether he should do more. Coaching more frequently would make the process more fluent - weekly rather than monthly. Coaching more frequently would make more comfortable to experiment with different approaches, rather than having to remember the basics.

Coaching is important

Coach JC -
Coach SD -
Coach JR - That coaching is important became clear to him when he left the organisation for a period. He missed coaching and wanted to pick it up again when he returned - "It is something that I enjoy doing and I often feel that it'd be the best two hours of that week, [chuckles] in terms of what contribution I can make to the business" (p6). He doesn't see a conflict with day-job as by its nature not all time is ultimately productive.
Coach MW - Role balancing is challenging and dynamic, but she does not regard coaching as a secondary role. Regards herself as a role model - "If I start to move those kind of things, if I say people and staff aren't important, I'll always keep cancelling one to ones or a coaching session. I'll move that because of operational need, then I'm saying to you if you're a line manager, that's all right for you to do that with your staff, and it isn't" (p8). Sees part of her role as to change the culture to one that value staff more. Sees having halved the sickness level of her part of the organisation as a tangible output of the approach she role models.
Coach JB - "I try to keep it part of the picture of what I do here. I couldn't do any more than I do now I don't think, just one coachee at a time, but I think it is worth keeping on in some way" (p7).
Coach LS - Looking back, realised how easy it was to let coaching slip, to let it go. Missed coaching,

wanted to maintain the skills; got a lot from it. Made a personal commitment (serious, doesn't make many) to coach at least one coachee; important not to let it slip again.
Coach GP - "I do find it hard" (p11). It is easy to cancel a coaching session because of the pressure of the day-job, but there are other things that can be cancelled to make time. Ultimately it is a personal decision. It is difficult but comes down to personal commitment - "If you really do truly believe in it and you can see the benefits and you can see then individual growing in front of your eyes and being able to solve their own issues, and benefiting from it, why would you not do it" (p12). As a coach feels a strong sense of responsibility, in a positive way.
Coach JP - Coaching is equally important to other aspects of her role. Sometimes meets coachees outside work hours if more convenient for them: is committed to coaching.
Coach GB - Does not see coaching as a separate role - "I see it as one and the same. I see coaching as part of what I do" (p7). Balancing can be difficult because training delivery is booked in advance and often coaching requests come in at short notice, and the support needed is immediate: "it can be tricky trying to weave it into what I've already got" (p17). However, it would be rare to cancel a coaching session.
Coach RB - Wearing different hats - scheme leader, L&D manager, internal coach - has caused a few strains "but it was worth doing" (p3). As an internal coach he is expected to be available to coach colleagues 30 hours per year.
Coach BS - He is prepared to move or cancel other activities to facilitate coaching, though recognises that fellow coaches might not feel able to do so, because coaching is important to him. He has made a commitment to coaching, which includes practice maintenance through attending CPD - "work would have to be seriously overwhelming for me not to go" (p7). "[Coaching is] the most rewarding part of my job even though it's quite a small portion so I'm dedicated to make time for that" (p7).
Coach JFa - Feels that if make a commitment it is important to "give a good quality service" (p7). She has decided to defer her MBA studies but maintain her coaching commitments. Is pragmatic, prioritising activities that support the organisation rather than her own studying. Decision to step back from her MBA was an evaluation of what her "purpose", her priorities, were - "if I had to choose between helping somebody achieve their goals or getting a piece of paper, I want to help somebody achieve their goal. That's a better contribution" (p9). Would want her epitaph to read "that 'I did some good and stood up for what I believe', as opposed to 'she worked 60 odd hours at work and didn't have her life'" (p10).

Make time

Coach JC - "I'd say not difficult because that I make it happen" (p17). "I don't think oh I haven't got two hours today, I never think that. I probably haven't got, sometimes, two hours to spare at all but I make the two hours" (p16). Coaching sessions don't get moved - "If I've scheduled something with somebody and then somebody more senior says 'Well, I need you that afternoon' I still would say I'm not available" (p17).
Coach JFo - Concern about getting back in the coaching zone. In reality when coaching the day-job doesn't intrude in spite of the pressures outside the room. There would have to be a "3-line whip" (p6) to cancel a coaching session.
Coach SD - Balancing the two roles? "I think I just do. I mean, for me even in my day-job my people come first. I take the same approach with coaching... I will deal with other stuff later" (p10) - if necessary, in the evening.
Coach SA - Balance of day-job and coaching is a personal choice. Ensures good contribution to the

organisation by ensuring that both day-job and coaching elements of role are covered. Makes coaching fit within role because it is important - “because it’s something that I want to do” (p6).
Coach PG - Also makes time for informal catch-ups with several former coachees. When organisation needs more coaching capacity, as last summer, feels that organisational investment in him “obliged” him to “stretch” himself to support (p7).
Coach PL - “[Coaching is] shoe-horned in I think is probably the right expression. In this role, because it’s very front line, it’s hard to get the time” (p3). He makes time to coach - “whoever is the coach has to be quite proactive in [making time to coach]” (p4). His line manager is also a coach and supports him having time to coach. Acknowledges that front line role is his priority - “obviously stuff to do with front line is miles more important because of all the threat and risk and harm there is, bit, I’ve always said that developing the staff is crucial. We’ve got to make time for that” (p5). Investing in people is very important. He works to protect coaching time but recognises that coachees have the same pressures on their time. He maintains coaching, in spite of periods of increased workload by working more hours.

Capacity not commitment

Coach JC - Involved in 6-month site restructuring project - “A priority because that was about peoples’ jobs” (p18). Took decision to scale down coaching from 3 coachees to 1 coachee.
Coach SA - Changes in role, increase in responsibility, required reduction in coaching workload: capacity adjustment.
Coach PG - Current involvement in large projects means is restricting ‘available’ capacity to three coachees.
Coach ED - In conjunction with L&D team has consciously reduced the level of coaching support when engaged with a big project.
Coach JB - Did step out of coaching for 8 to 10 months, due to workload on a particular project, but came back - “I valued it as part of the full picture of my job and keeping that going” (p4). Workload pressure, a project, meant he had to “bow out of supervision, out of training, out of practice. But then I got back into it” (p7).
Coach LS - Initially being a coach was a big part of her work life. “I would say that has reduced over time, with the pressures and changes within the business and changes in my role. I went through a phase where I didn’t have a coachee for a period of time” (p3). Pressure on day-job lead to reduction in coaching activity. She had underestimated the scale of the coaching commitment. However really wanted to maintain her coaching practice - “I get a lot from it in terms of learning for me, helping other people” (p4). Made a personal commitment to always have at least one coachee, to maintain skills and keep up practice. This enabled balance of coaching with day-job. Clear that it was not that coaching failed to meet her expectations.
Coach JFa - Stepped away for a period when she took on additional management responsibilities but has now re-started her coaching. Is curious to see how the two roles will now balance.
Coach JC - Impacts capacity, not commitment to coach. Capacity reinstated when project ended
Coach ED - A project might impact coaching capacity, but not commitment to coaching.
Coach JB - Missed coaching when stopped because of workload on project - “I think it’s valuable to me really” (p7). Coming back to coaching reinforced feeling that “it’s something I want to keep doing” (p8).

Role gives flexibility

Coach SD - Believes his role gives flexibility to balance coaching and day-job. Recognises that other types of role might have less freedom.
Coach SA - Having good team in place gives personal flexibility - “luxury” (p6) - to give high level of support to coaching programme. Recognises that role gives freedom to balance the two roles, perhaps more than others.
Coach JR - Feels his position enables him to manage his time and make coaching part of his work. “I haven’t shared with my line manager that I’m actually a coach” (p5). His line manager is “very instructive” - “I’ll tell you what to do” (p5). Concerned “he doesn’t have the same view of coaching as I do” (p5). Therefore, not comfortable to share with him that is a coach. Though position enables him to coach he is “reticent to ask permission” (p5) to engage in CPD events (e.g. given was upcoming EMCC conference).
Coach JB - Recognises that the nature of his job makes it possible for him to do coaching; that for large numbers of staff it must be hard to fit in.
Coach LS - Role and seniority give flexibility to incorporate coaching. Line manager support does not change the balancing act, nature of her current role is more important in that.
Coach JP - The nature of her role means she has no-one looking over her shoulder - “as long as I fulfil all the requirements of my job, I can do stuff the way I want to do” (p8).
Coach GB - Feels her role does make it easier to be a coach. There is an element of expectation that, because of the resources committed, coaching will be offered. Her role also allows her to exert influence to make sure the coaches are supported: personal drive.
Coach LM - Autonomy of her role means little interference from line manager and the ability to flex how she works. Her line manager, though initially sceptical, has not experienced coaching and reaped the benefits from it.
Coach PL - His role (rank) does make it a little easier to balance coaching and his day-job - “because I have a little bit more say in how my day is structured” (p5). Sees the challenge for the organisation is to enable everyone to get involved in coaching rather than just more senior people.
Coach JFa - As a manager she does have some control over her time.

Appendix 19 – Snapshot of the process of identifying themes and testing their fit with the data

Tables 1 to 5 below show a snapshot from the process of identifying patterns across the coded data and the development of themes that captured these patterns. The iterative process, which involved debate with supervisors and a colleague, sought to challenge whether potential themes identified were sufficiently supported by the coding data, and to test their fit with and distinctiveness from other themes identified.

For example, Table 1 below shows the theme developed about the impact of stakeholder attitudes on the coaching environment the internal coaches experienced. Ultimately this became theme 3 – The light by which I coach – in the final analysis (see chapter 5). However, whilst the first three sub-themes shown in table 1 became the sub-themes 3a, 3b and 3c ultimately, the last sub-theme – Still room for misunderstanding and misuse – was felt to be sufficiently distinctive to become a separate theme in its own right: theme 4 (see chapter 5).

Table 1

THEME - The light by which I coach: Stakeholder attitudes to coaching are experienced as linked to the focus placed upon coaching by the organisation			
Central organising concept (COC) - *The organisation's attitude towards coaching and its internal coaches provides the light by which coaches work and by which the work of the coaches is made visible to colleagues.*			
Sub-theme (ST) - Coaching under organisational floodlights	ST - Coaching in the shadows	ST - The light level can change over time	ST - Still room for misunderstanding and misuse (is this a separate theme?)
COC - *Coaching clearly visible in the organisation: integrated into the people development strategy; talked about; supported.*	***COC - Connection of coaching to the organisation's strategy is unclear or missing. Coaching is sustained by individuals rather than the organisation.***	***COC - Over time, stakeholder changes result in the organisation's attitude to coaching, and the internal coaches, changing.***	***COC - Coaches experience stakeholder misunderstanding of what coaching is, and is not, and, attempts by stakeholders to use coaching for inappropriate purposes.***
Coding data supporting theme • Visible link to organisations values or objectives: built into leadership development programmes; talked about at conferences;	• Not embedded in the organisation, e.g. talk coaching until get external challenge then revert to command-and-control. • Coach role not recognised: line manager passive, linked to lack or	• Leadership team changes can impact level of understanding and buy-in, and therefore support or focus.	• Low level of understanding of coaching linked to lack of communication. • Importance of scheme management in generating understanding. • Preconceptions ○ Stigma – remedial

THEME - The light by which I coach: Stakeholder attitudes to coaching are experienced as linked to the focus placed upon coaching by the organisation			
Central organising concept (COC) - *The organisation's attitude towards coaching and its internal coaches provides the light by which coaches work and by which the work of the coaches is made visible to colleagues.*			
Sub-theme (ST) - Coaching under organisational floodlights	ST - Coaching in the shadows	ST - The light level can change over time	ST - Still room for misunderstanding and misuse (is this a separate theme?)
promoted to specific groups such as new starters. • Coaching contributing to the development pf the organisation's culture. • "Absolutely tonnes of support" (G) – supervision, CPD, wider engagement opportunities – a non-subject. • Organisational support for coaching prevents barriers being erected. • Support for coaching more than for coaches: "We don't celebrate the coaches". • Support received acknowledged to be recognition. • Is contributing to and supporting the organisation. • Coaches obliged to support coaching needs	organisational emphasis. ○ "Like being part of the French resistance" (H). ○ Impact of hierarchical nature of the organisation. ○ Questioned whether coaching s a good use of their time. • Seen as inferior to external coaches. • Coaching not promoted: not valued; perceived to be at risk. • No or limited support available after initial training. • Support received, albeit limited, acknowledged to be recognition. • Recognition limited to those with direct experience of coaching, e.g. coachee. • Focus on and get reward from the coachee, not the organisation. • Values driving the coaching are those of the coach rather than of the organisation.	• Change of strategic direction. • A change of line manager could impact ability to coach. • Role of scheme leader more than just providing admin, CPD and supervision: realised when lost. • Change in fortunes of coaching scheme impact standing of coaches. • Coaching requires energy to sustain it: constant nurturing.	○ Cry for help - weakness ○ Will be given solutions ○ Will fix problem subordinates ○ There to teach skills • Seeking access to coach because of coach's day-job • Some coaches had own preconceptions when first encountered coaching.

THEME - The light by which I coach: Stakeholder attitudes to coaching are experienced as linked to the focus placed upon coaching by the organisation			
Central organising concept (COC) - *The organisation's attitude towards coaching and its internal coaches provides the light by which coaches work and by which the work of the coaches is made visible to colleagues.*			
Sub-theme (ST) - Coaching under organisational floodlights	ST - Coaching in the shadows	ST - The light level can change over time	ST - Still room for misunderstanding and misuse (is this a separate theme?)
of the organisation. • Position of coaching experienced as embedded, stable, secure.			

Table 2 shows the theme that became theme 1 – Changed by coaching – though ultimately the sub-theme identified initially – "Born to coach" – was not felt to be distinctive from the main theme and became part of it (see chapter 5).

Table 2

Theme - "Like pulling a veil back to see another world": Changed by coaching	
	ST - "Born a coach": Not changed by coaching (Is this a sub theme, or just part of the main theme?)
COC - Coaching has changed the way the coach sees themselves, and, the way they see and interact with others.	***COC - Formally becoming a coach has made them realise that they have always been a coach.***
Coding data supporting theme • Change started with first contact with coaching: as a coachee, or on a course. • Surprised by the impact of first contact with coaching: how did the coach do that; life changing. • Greater self-understanding and self-awareness. • Greater awareness of their impact upon others. • Other focussed • Increased confidence; realisation that their challenges are not unique to them. • Has led to change in approach outside the coaching room: management of team; approach to own children. • Changed management style: less directive; calmer; more reflective. • Change recognised by others.	• Not changed as already a coach. ○ Has always adopted a coaching style. • Coaching supported them to be the way they wanted to be.

Theme - "Like pulling a veil back to see another world": Changed by coaching	
	ST - "Born a coach": Not changed by coaching (Is this a sub theme, or just part of the main theme?)

Table 3 shows the theme that became theme 2 – Believer – and the sub-themes that became sub-themes 2b and 2d. Ultimately the theme shown in table 4 was not felt to be distinctive from theme 2 (Believer) and was split into what became sub-themes 2a and 2d. Additionally, one element of sub-theme – I prioritise coaching – in table 3 was felt to be distinctive from the rest of this group – the last bullet point: Test potential new coach's understanding of and motivation to coach – and ultimately became theme 6: Our kind of coach (chapter 5).

Table 3

Theme - "Because it's the right thing to do": Believer	
COC - Belief in the value of coaching, that coaching is important, has led to it being incorporated into the employee's role in the organisation.	
ST - Coaching is for life, not just for coachees	ST - I prioritise coaching: Protecting the ability to be a coach
COC - Coaching is not just a role undertaken with coachees. It has been incorporated into the way the coach interacts with stakeholders more widely.	***COC - Coaches actively take steps to ensure that they are able to sustain their coaching practice.***

Coding data supporting theme
• Not just something I do, but who I am: an internal identity, and for some an externally proclaimed identity.
• Belief in coaching: it is something that could benefit everyone - employees, managers and organisation.
• Coaching is an important part of their role
  ○ Not viewed as secondary to day-job
  ○ Recognised importance when stopped coaching
  ○ Commitment to keep it going
  ○ Prioritise coaching: make time
  ○ Importance goes beyond the relatively few hours spent doing it
• It is a way of helping and supporting colleagues, and, for some, the organisation
• Being a coach extends beyond the coaching relationship
  ○ Coaching own team
  ○ Supporting organisational development programmes as a coach
  ○ Support staff through organisational change
  ○ Incorporated into their life
  ○ Incorporated Into the way they interact with their children
	• Analyse capacity and plan coaching to stay within that capacity: don't over commit.
	  ○ Work hard to honour the coaching commitments made
	  ○ Feel don't coach enough
	  ○ Reduce capacity if need to: capacity not commitment
	• Use role flexibility to balance coaching and day-job: ensure day-job covered to avoid coaching time being questioned.
	• Filling the support gap: coaches becoming more self-sufficient -
	  ○ Taking responsibility to access support needed; personal responsibility felt whether coaching in the shadows or under organisational floodlights
	  ○ Taking personal steps to promote coaching
	  ○ Lobby for internal support mechanisms to be put in place
	  ○ Use of peers and networking to sustain practice, e.g. through supervision group
	  ○ Use wider coaching industry to fill gaps in support. Typically, only reason for engaging.

Theme - "Because it's the right thing to do": Believer	
COC - Belief in the value of coaching, that coaching is important, has led to it being incorporated into the employee's role in the organisation.	
ST - Coaching is for life, not just for coachees	ST - I prioritise coaching: Protecting the ability to be a coach
	○ Coach outside organisation to maintain or develop coaching practice • Absence of support - organisation or line manager - would not stop them coaching. ○ Not told line manager is a coach to avoid risk of being told to stop ○ Coach for those they help, not for the organisation • Test potential new coach's understanding of and motivation to coach: protective of coaching – <u>NOTE eventually became a separate theme</u>. ○ Commitment required ○ Not just a tick-box, or an addition to the CV ○ Risk of damaging the perception of coaching in the organisation

Table 4

Theme – "I get as much back from them as they probably get from me": Coaching benefits the coach
COC – Coaching is recognised by the coach as being beneficial to them.
Coding data supporting theme • I benefit personally ○ Professional development and growth ○ Perspective: own challenges ○ Taking time: getting off the treadmill ○ Personal learning: the value of listening ○ Business insights ○ New experiences and relationships • Realisation of personal benefit started at first contact with coaching. • Coaching skills differentiate the coach; a source of pride; a form of status. • Coaching is very rewarding ○ Gratification ○ Making a difference ○ Pride ○ Satisfaction ○ Energising ○ More job satisfaction than gets from the day-job • Is sought out by colleagues to help or support them: reputation building.

Table 5 became theme 5 in the final analysis (chapter 5).

Table 5

Theme - Line manager support? More an absence of barriers
COC - Line manager's attitude to subordinate's coaching role reflects their view that coaching is a minor, secondary role.

Coding data supporting theme
• Support provision – training; CPD; supervision – and management of coaching is provided by a separate function, centrally.
• Coaching not recognised as part of role by line manager
  ○ Coaching role not visible to line manager.
  ○ Not part of formal performance review, unless raised by the coach
• [Some] Line managers recognises that coaching could benefit delivery of their subordinate's day-job
• Line manager experienced as 'passive', 'ambivalent', 'leaves me to it', 'neutral', 'tolerating': disinterested.
• A line manager's view of coaching can be different to the view of the coach, even when the line manager is a coach.
  ○ Emphasis placed upon coaching by line manager linked to how coaching is regarded in the organisation.
• Status of coaching prevents barriers being put in the coach's way.
• Coaches would challenge and overcome barriers put in their way.